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## BARTHIANISM AND THE CHURCH IN AMERICA

By Manfred Manrodt, Th. M.

When Dr. Keller published his remarkable book on "Der Weg der dialektischen Theologie durch die kirchliche Welt"* he offered us something which only a man with the training and the position like Dr. Keller's could produce. The writing of this book required not only a thorough knowledge of the theologies of the countries discussed, but also that broad and sympathetic understanding which is only afforded the man who is in vital touch with all of these churches. Only thus can one pass a clear judgment on the influence of a movement upon the churches of the world. Although Dr. Keller himself protests that the American condition changes continually and renders impossible a permanently valid characterization, his work will in all probability remain the standard reference book on the critical evaluation of the various ecclesiastical positions and also on the peculiar attack of Barthianism in each particular field.

Dr. Keller possesses the rare gift of rendering a difficult problem in lucid and readable form, but the proposition itself is by no means simple. Barthianism is not really a movement; it is primarily a theology even though its tremendous spread has given it the appearance of a movement. A movement usually presents one or several definite propositions the acceptance of which results in some equally definite action. Thus the present Oxford Group Movement talks about "Quiet Time" and "Guidance," about "Confession" and

* Chr. Kaiser Verlag, Muenchen, 1931. English translation to be published by MacMillans this fall.

"Restitution," all of which are practised in concrete fashion by its adherents. A theology, on the other hand, is a scientific exposition and offers an understanding, an intellectual grasp of certain religious facts. It is a remarkable testimony to the penetrating power of Barthianism that it has also been called a movement, and of its remarkable depth and richness that it is able, as Dr. Keller presents in graphic detail, to attack every church on its own ground.

When we discuss the influence of Barthianism upon the Church in America as a whole we should think of it primarily as a theology. Dr. Keller, like most other critics, therefore lays the groundwork and describes the meeting of our current theological views with this new theology. But this is by no means identical with the influence of dialectical theology upon American church life and thought. Dr. Keller takes the position of the theologian—possibly also of the European churchman—and according to that a reaction is to be expected from and observable in every quarter of professional Christian work. When a startling message in their own field strikes people, it seems fair enough to assume that they will listen to it, reflect on it, and then decide for or against it, or find a compromise. This must be true with men who are theologically interested, but it is not true with the Church in America as a whole. Whether we say that the interest in theology has wilfully been undermined for the sake of supposedly superior life-problems, or whether we say with Zerbe:* "The American mind having little use for the recondite questions of philosophy unless they have a practical twist, is unable to evaluate the 'crisis,' 'dialectic,' 'transcendental,' or whatever best characterizes the new theology," the simple fact is that theology itself does not "take" and the fate of Barthianism only furnishes another illustration.

After an excellent preliminary discussion of the theological situation in America, Dr. Keller then turns to a number of outstanding leaders and discusses their reactions. He does this in the apparent belief that through them American church-life becomes articulate; perhaps there also attaches to it the silent expectation that eventually their reactions will become the reactions of the multitude. The writings and addresses of men are, of course, the only tangible expression of a nation's belief and position anywhere, but in our country these men seem to be less representative than elsewhere. The principal sphere of influence of most American churchmen lies within their denomination, and no one denomination controls the mind of the country. One may point to such interdenominational institutions as Union Theological Seminary, New York,

* The Karl Barth Theology or the New Transcendentalism, by Alvin Sylvester Zerbe, Ph.D., D.D., Central Publishing House, 1930, p. 19.

but the number of their students is insignificant in proportion to the mass of men studying for the Christian ministry. A larger number of her graduates may occupy outstanding pulpits and engage in literary activity, but in these very instances they will cater to an intelectual upper crust and never penetrate to the masses of Christian preachers. Excepting Harry Emmerson Fosdick, I doubt very seriously that the average American pastor knows even the name of but one of the men at this school, which is as outstanding as any, except perhaps the representative of their own denomination. It would be different if America had its own Barthian scholar who, in the course of his life, would contribute a Barthian deepening to our church life in the same way as Rauschenbusch has done it for the Social Gospel. But the reactions of these leaders are no more than the waves on the surface of the ocean. They disturb the traveller, but the vast ocean underneath remains calm with the exception of its own steady currents. Naturally every outstanding individual has his followers, especially if he is engaged in the teaching profession. In an ever widening circle his students will diffuse his position and message. But it takes more than a leader to exert an abiding influence. With the lengthening distance of time and space from the seminary the influence of a man becomes ever more attenuated. By its very nature the influence of the "leader" is ephemeral; he struggles with "Zeitfragen;" it takes the scholar and theologian who appreciates the profounder problems of man as such, of sin and salvation in the eternal and cosmic sense, who will exert an abiding and living influence. I certainly do not mean to question our leaders' right to the title of theologians, some of them are scholars, but not even once in every century does God send a man who is able to combine effective leadership and profound scholarship as they were for instance given to Protestantism in Luther and in Calvin. And those who would be leaders in their own day usually pay the price for whatever success they may be able to command. I therefore insist that Barthianism will influence the church in America only to the extent that it is able to influence the broad mass of Christian ministers and the interested laity, and it is here where it fails to take a gripping hold.

One could therefore quickly dispose of this whole matter with the bare statement that the American clergyman is not theologically minded. This statement has been offered as a critical exposition of our situation, but more often it is shouted with a show of bravado that reminds one of the boy whistling in the dark, and sometimes there lurks from underneath a faint confession of inferiority. Neither the bravado nor the sense of inferiority are justified and are due largely because the situation is not gener-

ally understood. I am sure also that the average European churchman does not understand our situation and that only men of rare sympathy like Dr. Keller (as I have learned from later, personal contacts), or men like our own Dr. Petersmann (who has grappled with the problems of a struggling mission church), appreciate our peculiar task.*

Our situation is first of all due to what I would describe as our theological "melting pot." The situation is further aggravated by the fact that the average American clergyman possesses but a moderate theological training. He understands and appreciates theological problems if they are presented to him in a clear way, but he has not been schooled enough to be really interested or to possess that keen sense of criticism, which enables one to judge independently, or even only to observe outstanding characteristics. It is significant in this connection that a writer of the theological insight and interest like Dr. McCasland, after clearly defining the contrary positions of the American psychologist and Karl Barth in these words: "The two approaches are utterly hostile to one another. They arise out of different social and cultural backgrounds" finds it advisable to emasculate his fine presentation by saying: "But they have the great element in common that each in its own way is set to the enrichment of human life."** Dr. McCasland is evidently aware that our lack of criticism has driven us so far that we resent an honest critical exposition as though it were given at the expense of Christian brotherliness. A kindly word of compromise must be added to make it acceptable to the American reader.

The "melting pot" simply means that many denominations are thrown one upon another in close proximity. They will work together in many ways, there will be intermarrying between churchmembers and also the clergy, and the resulting "mixed marriages." Even though there may remain an indefinable feeling that one is more at home in one's own church one will gain an appreciation of the other's good will and honest endeavor. While most of this fraternizing and intermingling is commendable, we have paid for it by a loss of theological appreciation and insights. We have buried critical judgment and have reaped confusion. Many people hail this theological indifference as desirable "broadmindedness" and "pure Christian religion" as over against "mere theology" but the error lies in the fact that these by themselves never represent

* I may mention in this connection that Dr. Keller's latest book "Vom Unbekannten Gott," which I reviewed in the *Friedensbote* of March 5, 1933, is partly an endeavor to meet a situation such as ours and is one step in the direction which I would offer as a solution in the last paragraph of this article.

** Selby Vernon McCasland in *The Christian Union Quarterly* of April, 1932, p. 373.

opposites! Confusion does not make better Christians. Blindness or indifference to my neighbor's strength or weakness does not make me a better neighbor. It is no more than an easy and morbid sentimentality, which is neither worthy of the great cause of our Lord's Gospel nor of the worthy cause of interdenominational appreciation and cooperation.

The "melting pot" itself is a given fact and we have succumbed to its subtle temptations and allowed ourselves to be lulled to sleep by the comfortable feeling that we are drifting into a profounder realization of the Gospel. And this attitude is not conducive to a serious consideration of a difficult theology.

Due to this persistent suppression and rejection of critical judgment the American mind does easily become the subject of direct propaganda instead. Where men do not possess sure judgment they will desperately hold on to some touchstone to show up the genuine from the false. Let it be said that Barthianism believes in the justification of Bible criticism and it is done for with most fundamentalists even though Karl Barth has done more than any one else in this century to establish the authority of Scripture. Let a modernist hear of Barthian transcendentalism and he knows enough to be averse to this "sixteenth century theology." Judgment based on slogans is not judgment. I believe that many doors are shut to Barthianism not because of direct, conscious opposition, but simply because of this confusion. This very state of mind is to be regretted since God may have something very important to say to us through the various theologies.

As a further hindrance to Barthian influence I would point to the fact that much of our church life is still in a flux. Nothing is given, established, fixed; neither the buildings nor the congregations, not even the denominations. The buildings may yield to an encroaching business district, congregations change as people move about, denominations may grow or weaken or merge or simply lose their identity through gradual processes of education or lack of education. When a modern minister takes a new church, he does not take it for what it is, but for what he expects to make out of it. If he is successful in the ordinary sense of the term, new buildings will spring up, there will be many accessions to the church membership, his own position and salary will show happy increases. But it is not only the pastor who looks at the church in this light; the congregations are expecting such definite, outward manifestations of a fruitful ministry. To what extent this conception of the ministry is actually controlling our minds is well illustrated by the practice of the "Christian Century," which on one page glorifies the "prophet" who is not understood and who in a self-sacraficing way

presents the deeper problems of life, and in the columns of "News of the Christian World" applaudingly quotes facts and figures of new buildings, numbers of accessions, and recognition by the public press.

Many American churchmen ascribe this tendency to the fact that we have not fully outgrown the pioneer stage. It is true that there is still in us that restless spirit of wanting to get away from the given outward situation to something bigger and more glorious. It is also due, however, to our system of free churches. Excepting the few heavily endowed churches and institutions, we have no assured income with which to carry on our work, and we therefore need the people. I do not mean to refer to that unfortunate denominational competition which practically belongs to bygone days; nor do I mean to imply that our churches on the whole have surrendered to an unworthy spirit of commercialism; but I do mean that we are biased. We are not open-minded to any theology to be willing to examine it as to the truth of its tenets, but we are prejudiced in that we always keep a weather-eye as to whether this theology will work. And this is where Barthianism fails! It does not work as a church-theology. We remember the wise saying that one can catch more bees with a drop of honey than with a barrel of vinegar and we gladly and efficiently apply this principle to our church work.

Unfortunately Barthianism is everything but honey. It robs the church member of his beloved optimism which the church has fostered for years and years and which has rendered him such an enthusiastic worker. If a spokesman of the Christian Unity League says: "We have no right to fear. We are pursuing the pathway that was marked out in our Master's prayer that they might be one, and in pursuance of that and in obedience to that prayer, how can we doubt the future," he strikes a note that is acceptable to our people. The outstanding characteristic of our generation is self-confidence. "No generation has been so free, so well informed, and so dependably ready for adventurous action as the present one."* The Christian Unity League is sure of the churches' ability to bring about a Christianized world, stating in the introductory sentence of its pact: ". . . believing that only in a cooperative and united Christendom can the world be Christianized. . ." And the orthodox churchman holds to his dogma as the equally sure ground of salvation. They all find strength in their particular position and with such conscious strength goes assurance, often pride, more often intolerance to others, and (which concerns us most at this time) indifference to every theology but their own.

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* Peter Ainslie in "The Equality of all Christians before God," *The MacMillan Company*, 1930, p. 16.

These men are sure of themselves, of their cause, and of the future. This is also an appealing motive in the Oxford Group Movement. Although this offers no church program of any sort, it establishes a fellowship of joyful assurance upon which any church may thrive.

Barthianism is more humble in its own mind. It does not profess to know with absolute certainty, it does not profess to be or to possess. It knocks away all the props which assurance has supplied. It offers guidance unto a profounder grasp of spiritual truth, but it does not build churches, nor does it generate that contagious spirit of assurance which has been the backbone of much of our ecclesiastical effort and success.

Karl Barth discourages all assurance. Rudolf Otto started it by defining the holiness of God and establishing the distance between Him and His unholy creatures. Barthianism goes to the extreme and insists that we can neither approach nor apprehend God—Finitum non capax infiniti. With American theology drifting towards immanence it is difficult to accept the absolute transcendence which the Barthians propound. Another stumbling-block is found in the Barthian insistence on the crisis. We are still largely optimists. The depression has depressed but never broken us. Barthianism requires a broken heart and a surrendering mind. We still believe in the basic goodness of all men and still trust that somebody will evolve better plans of economic and social life. It is significant in this respect to observe the deep interest, if not optimistic anticipation, with which quite a few of our Christian leaders look to Russian communism. At any rate, even though we may have a lurking suspicion that Barth may be closer to the truth than we are, we are by our very position predisposed to be prophets of a better day and of a kindly provident deity than to proclaim the judgment of a wrathful God upon a sinful world with no hope than that offered in eschatology. It is so much nicer to work with God Himself in a gradual process of Christianizing the world than to be driven by the urgent demand of an 'either—or." Such insistence is resented in America and the facts certainly do not seem to warrant such gloomy views as the "Theology of Crisis" presents. We would not be identified with the priest Amaziah over against the prophet Amos, but we are sure that there is no need right now in God's own country for a prophet of doom.

Because we are theologically indifferent we have permitted our external situation to gain control over our minds (if not over our whole lives!) and conditions here in America have made us pragmatists. We do not care, for instance, to examine into the truths of Lutheranism, but we are interested and grant it a reluctant approval when we see that it "works:" they prosper and for years

had more candidates for the ministry than they could employ. The new Oxford Group Movement does not appeal to many people because it brings back certain fundamental Christian principles, but because it is recommended as bringing results. For that same reason many an unworthy sect has of course also found a respectful hearing. But on that very basis of judgment we close the door to Barthianism. Many a statement may be true and still not find wide acceptance nor be capable of immediate results. I would here point to St. Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 1: 26-29, not in the sense that Barthianism represents true Christianity as over against other theologies, but simply as a general criticism of our attiude of indifference wherever we do not see results of constructive church work. This is simply one of the facts which is working itself out against this particular theology.

As a church-theology Barthianism is not acceptable. As Emil Brunner has shown, it will produce true social character and awaken in men a deepened sense of their solidarity with all men, but its immediately observable effect upon our church members is the loss of interest in much of our so highly prized activity. And to the busy pastor it offers no ready solutions for his practical problems. There are no young peoples' programs, no sermons that can be quoted, there is no inspiration for a campaign, no incentive to push forward into the open. Barth directly rails against these! "Let us build community houses, push our young people's program, organize discussion groups, plan special service of music! . . . For all our new patches, the old garment still remains the old garment."* But as pastors of live churches we must somehow dispose of these problems before we may have leisure to sit down and study theology.

Yes, we do dispose of all of these problems first and often also last, but does it *have* to be done that way? Our whole situation and disposition is against Barthianism, but is that the answer to give to a serious proposition that insists on bringing a clearer appreciation of God's revelation, an effort to dispel the fog and present to us a clearer understanding of the relation that obtains between the holy Lord of the Church and us, the members of that church? Is our business really so important, and are our efforts of fraternizing really so vital, and our disposition so sacred that we cannot give it a fair hearing? I include this appeal in this exposition because I cannot help myself but believe that Barthianism can save us from much that is superficial in our work and shallow in our thinking.

The fact is that Barthianism has not found much of an en-

* The Word of God and the Word of Man, tr'd by Douglas Horton, p. 280f.

trance into American church life as such and that the prospects are not favorable that it will do so in the future, although there is the possibility of a gradual seeping in of Barthian influence through interested individuals. The isolated instances of deeper interest will gradually work themselves out like waves splashing upon the shore unless—the times grow harder still and we be driven out of our work and despair of the church, like persecution drove the early church out of the security of Jerusalem into foreign mission work. Barthianism is neither a "theology of despair" nor merely a "post-war theology" but the despair and the war and post-war experiences have prepared the soil for it in the countries of Europe while here the soil is not prepared.

We are facing the Barthian theology while we are in the midst of a strenuous and, in spite of all financial handicaps, still promising church work. Barthian theology assumes too much of a destructive rather than of a constructive appearance. It also lacks the grace of sugar-coating. The bulk of the Barthian literature is difficult and Karl Barth himself insists that one must have the courage to be difficult! I understand that there is a book on Kant's philosophy entitled "Kant fuer Kinder." I have never been able to get a hold of this book, which I understand to be written for students of philosophy, but the title certainly is promising. In the field of theology many of us are ready to admit our weakness and are longing for a deepened hold on Christianity. But the only way to remedy the situation is to help us overcome our obstacles. I wonder if the leaders of Barthian theology could not meet us half-way and give us "Die dialektische Theologie fuer Kinder." A general literature in the new spirit would help us. The works of Dostoiewsky are wearisome in places but they lift us out of our sphere into the deeper spiritual appreciation. I believe Dr. Keller's "Vom Unbekannten Gott" to be a step in this direction. It is not theology. It presents pictures of life that are aglow with our spiritual problems. But as we gaze at these pictures we breathe the clear and bracing mountain air of a profounder theology. Barthianism has not made many friends in America and will find it hard to gain entrance into the "new world." But there is a need and with this primary condition given, the answer may yet follow.

# THE WORLD REDEMPTION AS SEEN BY THE PROPHETS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

By Carl Loos

For some time, we know, a revival of the interest in the message of the Old Testament prophets has been noticeable. Many thinking and observant people today look with eagerness to the sturdy, unbending witnesses of long ago, who in times similar to ours stood firmly on the truth as revealed to them in the Word of God, and who therefore were able to see above the mist of change, corruption and destruction the coming of the kingdom of God, which is to be the kingdom of righteousness, justice and peace.

These are the men we need today, seers, who by the power of vision are able to penetrate the many superficial unrealities proposed by some as a way out of depression, and to discern through and above the smoke screen of human failures, depression and unrest, the hidden realities of God's plan and purpose. For history is never antiquated. It continually repeats itself. Everywhere and at all times we see the same struggles, the same tragedy in the lives of men, hatred instead of love, sin and selfishnes instead of righteousness and brotherly sympathy.

In times of general prosperity individualism, or self-interest and self-satisfaction, is usually stronger than brotherhood, love and cooperation. But in great calamities, in worldwide depressions, man feels very keenly his helplessnes and dependence on others. He begins to believe that he needs them and that they need him. Or in other words individualism gives way to the community spirit, or the consciousness that no one can live unto himself and prosper.

Today when mass suffering has suppressed the desires of the individual and prepared his mind for brotherly cooperation, it is highly significant that the prophets were deeply conscious of the community needs and mass afflictions rather than of their own personal needs and individual troubles. In their sense of solidarity they include themselves with their people and assume their share of the common responsibility. Daniel prays "We have sinned and committed iniquity and have done wickedly and have rebelled." Daniel 9: 5, 6. Isaiah in chapter 53: "All we like sheep have gone astray." Jeremiah, unable to convert Israel by his warnings, voluntarily shares their shame and goes into exile with them in Egypt. Jeremiah 43.

This sense of solidarity and the sense of responsibility on the part of the prophets was not limited to Israel. It embraced the world. They felt the needs of all mankind as they saw their afflictions. In Amos 2: 1, for instance, and 9: 7 the prophet speaks of

the afflictions of the Moabites, Egyptians and Philistines. Isaiah weeps over the burden of the old enemy of his people, Moab. Isaiah 16: 9-11. Isaiah also sees Cyrus, the king of the Persians, as the anointed of the Lord, "the shepherd" of Israel, who will rebuild Jerusalem and lay the foundation for the new temple. Isaiah 44: 28; 45: 1.

Thus the prophets see and interpret the world situation. They show how God finally fulfils his promises and accomplishes his purpose throughout the ages. They were able to do this because they adhered strictly to the revealed will of God. Therefore they insisted that only on the ground of justice, righteousness and loyalty to God a nation can be strong and prosperous. The admonition of Micah (6: 8) is typical, "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good, and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God."

Because the prophets were instruments of the Holy Spirit they were fearless. They were men of clear vision and well defined judgment in religious and political matters. They were not afraid to mix religion and politics. Isaiah in chapter seven warned king Ahaz not to enter into confederacy with Rezin of Syria, and Pekah, king of Israel, the northern kingdom, because he saw more quickly and clearly the dangers which such an alliance would involve. See also Isa. 30: 1ff. Jeremiah advises king Zedekiah, a weakling, to make his peace speedily with the great world-power Babylon, instead of breaking faith with it, as the false prophets had counseled to do. Jeremiah 27: 12. Ezekiel lays the foundations on which the Jews after their exile reorganized as a nation. Ezekiel, chapters 40-48.

The lines along which the holy seers discern the world afflictions and the coming redemption are threefold, social, international and universal. They see their people, the nations of the world and all the universe, men and beasts, out of harmony with God and his will. We cannot in this article cite all the many pertinent references. A few which are typical shall be given, and we can indicate only their place in the prophetic writings. Isaiah 1: 10-20; 58: 1-7; Jeremiah 22: 13-17; Amos 2: 6-8; Micah 2: 2. All these and many other prophetic utterances prove that Israel is out of harmony with God in a social sense, breaking the fundamental law, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

The nations of the earth likewise are out of harmony with God. Brutal force, oppression and exploitation of weak nations by the stronger are the indications of an international social dishormony. Egypt, Assyria and Babylon are the world powers which boastfully and rudely defy Jehovah and oppose Israel. Moab, Edom, the Amalekites and the Philistines perhaps in a lesser sense

are guilty of the same sins. Isaiah chapters 14-23; Amos chapters one and two.

Then finally the prophets see the entire world as being out of harmony with God, a universal, or cosmic disharmony. Not only man and nations but the universe, the earth, all nature, have a part in it and are suffering for it. Isaiah in the 24th chapter sees the earth "mourning and fading away." The world is polluted because the inhabitants have "transgressed the laws and violated the everlasting covenant." Therefore "the earth is cursed and they that dwell therein are burned, and few men left." The prophet Habakkuk writes in chapter 3: 17, "The fig tree shall not flourish, neither shall fruit be in the vines, the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no fruit. The flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls." In Joel 2: 10 we read, "The sun and the moon are darkened, and the stars withdrew their shining."

Thus all the prophets see in their visions the results of sin which is disharmony with God. Cruel destructive forces in nature, such as storms, earthquakes, floods, drought, pestilence and famine give evidence of this disharmony and its evil fruits.

The Apostle Paul also felt this universal disharmony when he wrote in Romans 8: 22, "We know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." We of the 20th century may justly say, "Not until Pauline times only, but to our very day the world groaneth because of its disharmony with God." Have we not heard very distinctly the many voices in recent years, the voices of war, the shedding of our brother's blood; voices of devastation and ruin; groaning sounds of pestilence and "'flu" epidemics, of storms, earthquakes, aridity and floods? And there are evil forces not only in nature but also in the hearts of men, such as lawlesness, crime, hatred, covetousness, envy, selfishness and enmity to God and the church. All these things are indications that our present world, as much as the world in which Isaiah lived, is out of harmony with God. Unless we have stronger, superior forces to set against these evil powers in man and nature we shall lose in the combat with them.

We have these forces. They are not of our own. They are the gift of God through his Holy Spirit. Because the prophets allowed themselves to be filled with the spirit of God they did not despair of their people and the world at large, nor did they resign them passively to their doom. There is no pessimism in their utterances, no *Weltschmerz,* that sentimental and sometimes morbid sadness over the present and future evils of the world in which they lived. Their heart is filled with hope, and their message teems with expectancy and the certainty of world redemption.

Like the world afflictions the prophets see the coming redemption along three distinct lines. They recognize a social, an international and a universal reparation or redemption.

1. A social harmony shall take the place of the present social disharmony. All the differences of age, sex, class and race, which in the present time as much as in prophetic days give rise to ever recurring conflicts, shall be removed. The spirit of God shall be the uniting and equalizing force according to Joel 2: 28, 29, cited by Peter in his Pentecostal sermon, "It shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy; your old men shall dream dreams; your young men shall see visions; and also upon the servants and handmaids (slaves), in those days will I pour out my spirit."

Brutal force, replacing righteousnes so often, shall be abated. When force is used in the new order of things its purpose is no more the acquisition of selfish ends, of greed and lust of power, but the establishment of righteousnes and justice. Isaiah 32: 1-20.

In Isaiah 64 and Amos 9 we read that the wage question shall be regulated. No longer shall anyone enrich himself at the cost of his fellowman, nor shall the workingman be deprived of his just reward. Isaiah 62: 8, 9; 65: 21-23; Amost 9: 13, 14.

2. Then the prophets see an international readjustment or redemption. Isaiah 3: 2, 3, Zephaniah 3: 9, Zechariah 8: 23 predict a harmony and understanding with and between the nations. Isaiah and Micah see a warless world. Isaiah 9: 5, 13. In Isaiah 2 and Micah 4 we read of universal peace, of a time to come when nations shall no longer lift up their swords against nations. They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. This in our modern language means a complete, thoroughgoing disarmament.

In his nineteenth chapter, verses 21-25 Isaiah sees the hostile world powers of his day, Egypt and Assyria, united in a peaceful federation with his own small nation. If we substitute for Egypt and Assyria the names of the nations of today, we bring Isaiah's vision down to modern grounds. At no time before our own were stronger and more systematic efforts made to bring about world disarmament and universal peace.

3. And finally, not Israel alone, and not the nations of the earth alone shall have a part in the redemption, but the entire universe, now groaning together with the children of man shall be redeemed. Hosea 2: 18 is quite significant in this respect. The redemption of the universe shall be made possible because the principles of brutal force shall be destroyed, and the all-embracing law of love shall dominate men, nations and all the universe. Hosea

2: 19-23. The prophecy of Isaiah in chapter 11: 1-10 is a classic along these lines.

These are the glorious visions of the prophets, the hope of the apostles (Acts 17: 31; Romans 8: 22, 23), and the faith of the believers of all times. They are being fulfilled in our days. It may be yet a long time before they will be fully realized, but they are coming. No device or council of the enemies of God can defeat them, and no impatience of the friends of God can hasten them. The kingdom of God which is righteousness, peace and love will come in God's own appointed time, no sooner, no later. Faith, hope, love, repentance, service to God and fellowman are the superior forces which will gradually overcome the destructive powers of darkness, and prepare men and nations and the whole earth for the coming of a new heaven and a new earth, Isaiah 65: 17; Revelations 21: 1-4, as the final and eternal redemption.

In this redemption the destroying of the implements of war, the breaking of the bow, the cutting asunder of the spear and the burning of the chariot with fire (Psalm 46) are only incidents, not ends and aims, as we hear frequently in our day. Nevertheless they are highly significant and characteristic signs. According to the visions of the prophets the redemption of the world shall be perfected not so much by a slow process, or a gradual evolution and employment of the better and superior forces which will slowly but surely overcome the evil forces of darkness in man and nature. These are only the beginning, and they serve in a preparatory and educational capacity. The final act, as the prophets see it, will be a great catastrophe, the employment of irresistible forces, an extraordinary manifestation and dispensation of the power of God Almighty, who will overthrow the customary order of things.

1. Again the prophets see this catastrophe working along the lines of social, international and cosmic destructions and recreations. In Isaiah 2: 11, 12 we read, "The lofty look of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of man shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in the day. For the day of the Lord of hosts shall be upon everyone that is lifted up and he shall be brought low." Also in Isaiah 5: 20-24 and in many other passages of the prophetic writings the thought is brought out that the Lord will come to his people with vengeance to restore social righteousness.

2. And the prophets discern a political and international catastrophe. In the 38th and 39th chapters of Ezekiel the prophecy against Gog and Magog, representing the nations of the earth and the isles of the sea, is significant. It is prophetic of the final overthrow of all evil powers resisting the kingdom of God. The only prophetical book in the New Testament, the Revelations of St. John,

in chapters 16 and 20 describes this final struggle preceding the perfected redemption.

3. And finally, the prophets see a cosmic or universal catastrophe, which will overthrow and destroy everything which man deems unalterably firm and permanent. The mountains shall shake and be removed, the sun and the moon shall fade and fail, the stars shall fall, the world shall go under and pass away. The prophet Haggai, chapter 2: 6 says, "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, yet once it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens and the earth, and the sea and the dry land." The prophecy of Joel perhaps is best known, "I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood and fire and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord come." Joel 2: 30. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Zephaniah, Amos and Malachi also set forth the marks of the coming social international and cosmic catastrophe, going before the final redemption in which and by which all that human will, knowledge and science, wherever it is out of harmony with the will of God, shall be wiped out utterly.

All this, the final overthrow and the world redemption, will not come immediately and without warning and extensive preparation. God prepares the world redemption by selecting and setting apart a small group of men in whom he preserves unto himself a holy seed, and perpetuates the faith in the living God, which seed shall abide when all else shall go under and pass away. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are the chosen of God. Israel, delivered from Egypt, becomes the heir of the promise but fails. Isaiah 42: 19, 53: 1 and the oft used quotation in the New Testament from Isaiah 6: 9, 10 describe the failure of Israel as a nation of God..

But God cannot go back on his promise. While the failure of Israel as a nation is clearly seen by the prophets, we can notice, that the wider and clearer their visions grow, the narrower and smaller the circle is drawn of those whom God can use as his willing instruments to perfect his plan of world redemption. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Joel, Amos, Habakkuk, Micah and almost every other prophet frequently speak of a remnant, "the holy residue," which remains faithful, and which clings hopefully to the promise, waiting and praying for "the consolation of Israel," the coming of the redemption. Isaiah 1: 9; 6: 13; 10: 22, 23; Jeremiah 6: 9, 10; 23: 3; Ezekiel 6: 8; Joel 2: 32; Amos 5: 15; Micah 2: 12; Habakkuk 2: 8; Zephaniah 2: 9; 3: 13 Zechariah 8 12; Luke 1: 67-75; Luke 2: 25.

But even this narrow circle is still drawn closer. Out of the "remnant" the prophets see the rising of one who is appointed and anointed as the world Redeemer, the Messiah. Isaiah calls him

the servant of God. Isaiah 42: 1. See also Matthew 12: 18, Ezekiel 34: 23 and Zechariah 3: 8. In Isaiah 49: 6 we read, "Is it a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved (remnant) of Israel. I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth." According to Isaiah 61: 1, 2, the servant of God is "anointed to preach good tidings to the meek, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and freedom to the bound, and to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord," a prophecy which Jesus claimed to be fulfilled in him and by him. Luke 4: 16ff. Matthew 11: 4, 5.

But redemption will be brought about not so much by what the servant of God will do, as rather by what he will suffer. The 53rd chapter of Isaiah is the classic in all the prophetic writings. Isaiah, the "gospel prophet," here sees the Messiah not as the Lord of glory, power and majesty, but as the man of sorrows, acquainted with grief, despised and rejected of men, disowned and forsaken by his people, suffering, not for his own sins, for he is blameless, but bearing the sins of others, the social, international and cosmic transgressions of the universe. It appears from this 53rd chapter that the entire burden of the world disharmony is laid upon the servant of God. In incomprehensible, infinite love he concentrates on his person the sum total of the brutality of the past and the present world order, bearing it meekly as a lamb, and paying the price of sin, which is death. Through and in this holy sufferer God establishes his kingdom and works out his world redemption.

And this same servant of God, Jesus Christ, obedient unto death, is the stone, set at naught by the builders, but nevertheless he is become the head of the corner. (Isaiah 28: 16; Psalm 118: 22) There is not salvation in any other: for there is none other name giving among men whereby we must be saved. That name is Jesus Christ, born of a virgin (Isaiah 7: 14) crucified and risen from the dead, the same yesterday, and today, and for ever.

# DANGERS IN PREACHING THE SOCIAL GOSPEL

By W. Rest

Seven years have elapsed since the writer graduated from Eden Seminary. At that time he would probably have been classed among the "liberals" if not among the "radicals." In those seven years, however, the writer has made a new study of mysticism and pietism and has discovered, for himself at least, values which he did not dream existed. In preaching the Social Gospel in its "pure and unadulterated form" he sees, as a result of this study, some grave dangers.

This study has not led to an abandonment of the ideals inculcated in the seminary days. To him, the saying of Jesus: "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" still is not a mouthing of words, but an ideal to be attained. However, two distinct changes have been brought about in his thinking as a result of this study. The first is a change of method in which the ideals are to be attained and the second a discovery of higher ideals than social and ethical.

To many, those ideas as advanced in this article will be a return to the old conservatism of the days gone by; to others, in the light of Prof. Stanger's recent article, it will suggest an ultra-modern trend; to a few I dare hope, it will be a stimulus to a rethinking of their theology. To the writer it is quite evident that we must insist on a revaluation of pietism and mysticism if the ethical implications of Jesus' teaching are to gain content and meaning; without them those teachings are mere platitudes and forms. Or stated differently: With the values of pietism and mysticism Jesus' teachings constitute a religion, without them they are a mere system of ethics.

The dangers of preaching a "pure" Social Gospel are fourfold: 1. The loss of a feeling of intimacy with God. 2. The loss of an appreciation for higher values. 3. The loss of the motivating of Christianity and 4. The loss of the present opportunity.

## I. The Loss of a Feeling of Intimacy with God

The feeling of intimacy with God is mysticism's greatest contribution to religion. This feeling of intimacy with God was perhaps the strongest and guiding force in Jesus' life. (John 14: 10-13; John 15: 9, 23; John 16: 10, 15; John 17: 11, 41; Luke 9: 26, 48; Luke 10: 16, 22, 42.) These instances could be multiplied many times over, all show that Jesus considered this intimate relationship with the father to be the essential thing in his life.

Here we might state parenthetically and dogmatically that no

philosophical materialist nor psychological behaviorist can ever be religious in the commonly accepted use of the term. Philosophically, to be religious, we must posit God. Psychologically, we must go with William James and ascribe to the brain not mere productive powers only, but transmissive powers as well. For further development of this idea see any good book on the Philosophy of Religion.

This feeling of intimacy with God as a motivating force we will consider a little more fully under No. III. Let us now consider this feeling of intimacy as a fundamental concept of religion. This we can perhaps best do by approaching it from a negative angle.

*Sin and Sins.* Robbing a bank, religiously viewed, is not sin. It is merely the evidence of sin. For the lack of a better term we might call it "a sin." The specific act is not sin but rather "a sin." Sin is the greater all-inclusive term. In preaching the Social Gospel we do not attack sin as such, but merely the evidences of sin or "sins." In preaching from the old pietistic angle, we attacked sin and not so much sins. To the pragmatic American mind, this latter method did not bring results quickly enough, and therefore the pendulum was swung to the other extreme and sins were attacked and the concept of sin was forgotten or changed. Evidently Jesus' criticism of the Jewish, Pharisaical religion was that very thing, attacking sins and not sin (Matt. 5: 17-48; Matt. 23: 25.)

"Sins" can be defined as specific acts against the moral code. Sin we define as rebellion against God, or better yet, "The lack of the feeling of intimacy with God." Thus the rich young ruler (Mark 10: 17) could truthfully say that he had never committed a sin. Yet Jesus is not satisfied with such perfect negative goodness, he demands positive goodness: "intimacy with God." The thing that kept the rich young ruler from this intimacy with the father was his wealth. Jesus therefore advises him to rid himself of that which prevents positive goodness. Similarly Jesus advises to cut off a hand or a foot or to pluck out an eye if those things keep us from that intimate relationship with God. (Mark 9: 43-47.)

Having thus negatively arrived at the fundamental concept of religion as "intimacy with God," we see the extreme great danger in preaching the social gospel. In attacking sins (specific transgressions against the moral code) we are apt to place our shock troops as opposed to some specific sin, or perhaps a number of specific sins, and when that is conquered we discover to our dismay that we have been overwhelmed on front after front by other specific sins. The only way Christians can fight in this warfare against evil is not against specific sins, but by attacking the problem at its very root. Religion to be effective must bring about the feeling of an

intimate relationship between the self and God, the further this is nourished and developed, the more will specific sins disappear.

If we do not emphasize this fundamental relationship between a man and his God, we are but blind leaders of the blind and will justly deserve the same condemnation as that of the Pharisees by Jesus for the same fundamental fault.

The grave danger in preaching the social gospel is that we shall so busy ourselves with the side issues of specific sins, that we not only fail to develop that feeling of intimacy with God, but actually lose it. And thus instead of fighting sin, we are actually furthering sin.

II. The Loss of an Appreciation for Higher Values

"Why?" is a question that accompanies us from the cradle to the grave. "Why are things as they are?" is a question which philosophy and religion seek to answer. Philosophy tries to deduce the answer from known facts. Religion posits God as the creator and cause of everything and seeks to adjust man to him. In this quest for an answer to the eternal "why?" man has discovered that there are values of varying degrees. There are values such as food, clothing, shelter (physical values); also there are social values, ethical values, aesthetic values and ideal values (otherworldliness). (Hickman: Psychology of Religion.)

The social gospel, as its very name implies, seeks social and ethical values. But there are values higher than the social and ethical. There is grave danger that in preaching the social gospel we lose sight of these higher values. (If the reader does not agree with the point that there are values higher than social and ethical, that already illustrates the point that there is a grave danger of losing an appreciation of higher values in preaching the social gospel. That sounds pedantic, but it is true nevertheless.)

The Social Gospel emphasizes social and ethical values. That these values need emphasis no one in his right mind would deny; the danger lies in the fact that these values may be emphasized to the exclusion of higher values.

Any minister who has ever stood at a death bed recognizes the entire inadequacy of a mere social and ethical emphasis. Somehow, when the soul stands forth in all its nakedness, no shams, no illusions to cover it up, it demands an assurance of higher values. While at the death bed this demand for higher values is most clearly recognized, it is also very evident in all sorts of situations in life.

Never will the writer forget an interview with a man whom he was trying to bring into the folds of the church. The man had not attended church since he was a small boy until about a year previous to this interview. During that year he had lost his position, his bank had closed, his father had died, illness had forced

him into debt. The man told the writer that had all these things happened to him two years previous he was sure that he would have committed suicide and concluded with the statement, "but somehow I have gotten a different outlook on life since I have been going to church." With a pure social and ethical message would he have changed so completely as he evidently had? What new outlook on life could he have gained by telling him that within the next thousand years or so, social and ethical values would triumph to the extent that it would no longer be possible for him to lose his job, his money or keep from going into debt? What social or ethical message could have comforted him during the grief and pain of a father's death? To just such people who are adrift on the sea of life, religion has something better to offer; it can offer them composure, contentment and peace of heart in a turbulent world.

Hickman in his Psychology of Religion gives an excellent statement of this feeling for higher values and its incipient dangers when he says: "We feel that the ideal ought to be achieved, but our human recources are too weak to bring that ideal to pass, we must turn to higher than human power, or the ideal will fail of accomplishment. . . . Religious idealism may form around the idea that there is another world to come in which the ideal may be achieved. The hazardous thing about this form of idealism is that it tends to detach itself from the actual problems of life and become nothing more than a floating vision. *But even so,* it may serve to nerve the desperately tried soul to endure everything for 'the glory that is set before him.' On the other hand, the religious ideal of a better world to come may not be detached in this manner, but may concern itself so vitally with the present world as to beget a fever of restlessness with things as they are. Such idealism, powerfully enough motivated, may issue invaluable social reform, or it may spend itself in fanatical agitation."

Such idealism was that of the pietism of the "Ravensberger-land" and the "Wuppertal," which made possible a Bethel bei Bielefeld and a Barmer Mission. Idealism of that kind can be guided to accomplish those things desired by the exponents of the social gospel and still give content and meaning to life as it now is. Continual insistence on mere social and ethical ideals, on the other hand, will inevitably bring with it a loss of an appreciation for highest values.

Karl Heim, in his "Weltanschauung der Bibel" points out the fact that man, somehow or other is not satisfied with the promise that his good and ethical conduct will relieve future generations from suffering under the same conditions under which he is suffering. Man, he says, demands that he too shall find that satisfying something for himself, if not in this world then in the next. The

good old pious soul who is overwhelmed by one blow of adversity after another finds a satisfaction in the faith, that although he does not understand, he does know that God is watching over him. He lets adversity do its worst that he might be better prepared to serve his God.

To what utter ridiculousness such a loss of appreciation for highest values can drive one is seen from two incidents: The Rev. L. Birkhead of Kansas City argues with all the force at his command that it is not necessary to have God in religion. A religion without God! The other comes from a recent writing; after expounding the ideals of the Kingdom and extolling the virtue of non-resistance and love, the writer says: "It is necessary for the church to repudiate the appeal to force. . . That coercion will be necessary in dealing with larger groups is inevitable." Force to get rid of force! Wars to end war!

### III. The Loss of the Motivating Force of Christianity

In our quotation from Hickman and in our allusions to the pietism of the Ravensberger land and the Wuppertal we have already indicated some of the tremendous motivating force this appreciation for highest values may have.

In the life of St. Paul we see another outstanding example of that same motivating force which lies in the appreciation of highest values. Paul says: "For I reckon the sufferings of the present-time are not worthy to be compared with the glories that shall be revealed in us." (Rom. 8: 18.) The entire 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians reflects that same attitude of Paul's. There he claims for this highest value the sole reason for the existence of Christianity (v. 16: 17 especially 19). The quotations from his writings and especially from his prison epistles are exceedingly numerous. Paul evidently considered the distinctive and vitalizing force of Christianity to be a faith in Jesus Christ which gives assurance of these highest values.

The feeling of intimacy with God is another of these motivating forces we are apt to lose in preaching the social gospel. The great heroes of Christianity, those who accomplished anything at all in the furtherance of God's cause in the world were mystics. Merely to name a few will be sufficient: Paul, Francis of Assisi, St. Elisabeth, Huss, Luther, Calvin, Knox, Jonathan Edwards, Bodelschwingh, William Carey, Ian Keith Falconer and that multitude of valiants marching as a "mighty army." (With Pratt we do not confine our definition of mysticism to the abnormal pathological type, but also include the milder forms which would of course embrace all those who felt that peculiar relationship with God.)

To the pragmatic American mind the motivating force of the above is of course instantly recognizable. It works! That alone

should argue for its value and urge its retention, which is impossible with a bare preaching of the social gospel.

The pages of history abound with incidentals of great deeds accomplished by those who have said: "We which live, are alway delivered unto death for Jesus sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh."

The social gospel is not sufficient for man. He desires to live not only in an ethically and socially perfect world, but also in a physically perfect world. A world in which God "shall wipe away every tear," a world in which "death shall be no more," a world in which there shall be no pain. Unless we are optimists of the rankest kind we do not believe that the present vale of tears will ever arrive at such a point where pain, suffering, death shall be done away through our knowledge of the laws of nature. Still the human heart cries for such a world, only in the pietistic hope of such a world to come can we find satisfaction. In our striving to be worthy to enter into such a world, we find a powerful motivating force of Christianity.

### IV. The Loss of the Present Opportunity

Advocates of the Social Gospel have always had one fundamental fault. In Germany it is called "der amerikanische Optimismus." They have succeeded in deluding themselves by some form of "Couéism" to believe that the world is 'day by day, in every way, getting better and better." This form of evolutionary optimism has caused them to lose their sense of direction and value in two ways. The first is pointed out by Reinhold Niebuhr in his "Moral Man and Immoral Society." Niebuhr shows that all social relationships are fundamentally political rather than ethical; the Social Gospel advocate has lost sight of this fact. The second is brought out in Barthianism. Religion is not man's search for God, but rather God's search for man, this not in a social but primarily in an individualistic sense.

In the development of this last point we may be accused of making Christianity a religion of defeat. This we do not believe, but for the sake of arugment we say: "What of it?" If Christianity has something to offer the soul on the verge of despair, is that alone not something worth while?

Dr. E. H. Stranahan said recently: "The tragedy of this depression is not the loss of money, but the fact that Christianity has not been able to produce one single religious leader who can draw the masses back to God." Always in the past, Christianity has made its greatest progresses in the time of hardship. Christianity has always had its greatest revivals among the poor. In its very inception Christianity had its appeal in being the search of God for the individual to save him, not from an immoral society, but from

the bondage of sin. (Sin in the sense heretofore defined: estrangement from God.) Today, in an era of hardship our churches are not being filled, if anything they are less well attended. There are a few examples of where people have turned again to God in their despair, but these examples are few and far between. Christianity has not a movement of the masses towards it.

H. R. Knickerbocker in the "German Crisis" tells of a city, Falkenstein in Germany, which in 1920 led in a Bolshevistic revolution and set up a communistic, church-antagonising government. He says this city has now turned from "Workers' Councils" to "prayer rooms". He tells how in the last few years of despair people have turned to the church in masses until this city of 15,000 now has nine churches (an unbelievably large number for a German city of this size). He further reports that the strong "Freethinker" society of former days now only boasts of 50 members! Why have not we experienced similar religious awakenings in America? Is it because we have not been hit hard enough by the depression? Or is it because our Church and its message has become sterile?

Undoubtedly, the latter is a potent factor in this lack of a religious awakening. Is it perhaps not time now to re-evaluate our preaching and discover the cause of its weakness? Having done so, the answer may be found along the lines indicated in the preceding paragraphs. No longer do we hold out this mystic union with the father, no longer do we hold out the hopes of a personal salvation from sin and this world's griefs and pains, no longer do we hold up those ideals which have led people to say, "I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." No longer do we teach them to sing, "Whate'er I do, Where'er I be, still 'tis my God that leadeth me."

Unless we return to that age-old emphasis we can never hope to swing the masses into the folds of the church and into the arms of the Christ. With the utterance of mere platitudes about a Utopian society in the dim distant future, there is grave danger of losing our present opportunity to bring about a religious awakening.

Recently a leader in another denomination said: "I no longer believe it to be the duty of the church to lead every reform, and to try to root out every evil in the world, but I am beginning to think more and more that it is the duty of the church to spiritualize the lives of the people." When I asked this person what he meant by "spiritualizing the lives of people," he said "Teach them to think not in material, but in spiritual terms." After all he is right: The duty of the church *is* to spiritualize lives of people. In so doing it brings them into that vital relationship with God, thereby motivating them to do things for the Christ here upon earth.

# THE PROPOSED NAME

By J. H. Steger

"The Evangelical and Reformed Church." The Evangelical Synod, faithful as she was in her labors during the years of her existence, was handicapped by her official name. What does "Evangelical" mean to the average American? As soon as we mention the name Evangelical the question flies back, "Are we, the Episcopalians, Lutherans, Presbyterians, Methodists, etc., not evangelical?" They ask us, "Have you a special gospel? Or have you some esoteric insight with which we are not favored?" The new church statistician, Dr. Kiefer, almost aroused the ire of the editor of the "Evangelical Herald," because he listed the Evangelical Synod under the Evangelical family. Dr. Kiefer apologized, but blamed his secretary for that lapsus. Poor secretary! If the proposed name is accepted the secretary will be justified in classifying the Evangelical Synod among the Reformed family.

No doubt the average American is more familiar with the word Reformed than with Evangelical. "Reformed is sometimes used among us in a more general sense of all Protestant churches, sometimes in a restricted sense of a peculiar branch of the Reformed church" (Schaff, Ph.). Dr. G. W. Richard in his book on the Heidelberg Catechism claims that the term "Reformed" had its point turned against Lutheranism, rather than against Catholicism. The remark will be made that the conjunction in the proposed name while it connects the two names also separates them. But what does that mean to the man on the street? We are for him the Reformed church. In the same way as he leaves off the Evangelical of the Lutheran church, in the same way he will call us the Reformed church.

The Reformed brethren "favor a union with the other Reformed and Presbyterian denominations" (Evangelical Herald, December 10, 1930). One of the assistant editors of the Evangelical Herald in a gloomy mood cried out, "All that remains of an ambitious movement to bring into one body the Reformed church, the Presbyterian church in the U. S., the United Presbyterians and *our communion,* is for the moment a resolution referred back within the Presbyterian U. S. A. church." (Evangelical Herald, June 23, 1932). The esteemed brother should not be discouraged. If we keep on working in the same direction as in the past the day will not be far when *our communion* will be considered as somewhat of an appendix to the great Reformed-Presbyterian alliance. If then the appendix does not dry up in course of time, some famous doctors might suggest a more radical operation. In order to justify such an operation they will argue that the word "Evangelical"

is not practical, is hard to pronounce, is out of date, was given by some old German fogies and is not fit for an up to date American church. The commission on church union of the Evangelical Synod "looks forward to the actual union of the churches, a unity transcending the boundaries of Lutheran, Calvinistic and other Churches." While there is no scriptural authority as to the basis for surrendering the individuality of the respective churches, the proposed name is a peculiar example of the indicated transformation.

Years ago the writer at a conference proposed a number of names for our Synod. Among others were mentioned: *The American Church of the Reformation; The United Church of the Reformation; The Evangelical Church of the Reformation; The Church of the Reformation.* This was done not only in regard to the historical use of the word, but also in reference to Schleiermacher's well known slogan: "Die Reformation dauert fort." In the discussion it was brought out that the word Reformation "smells too much like Reform-school to the average American." But the very same brother who offered that friendly criticism a few years later came forth with the suggestion to call our Synod "The Evangelical Reformed Church."

Our Evangelical fathers were very clear in defining the word Evangelical. They were very careful in not mentioning any historical name of the particular churches of the Reformation. But if one historical name is mentioned why not the other? Repeatedly there appeared articles in the "Magazine" demanding that some churches affiliated with the Synod should drop the name "Lutheran" entirely. Why, then, not the name "Reformed"? It would be an interesting study to investigate from which historical church the majority of the constituents of the Evangelical Synod originated. Those who came from Germany belong to the mild Lutheran type as it exists in the Lutheran as well as in the Evangelical churches of the Fatherland. Those who were brought up within the Synod "feel more drawn to Wittenberg than to Geneva" as "our Synod is more Lutheran than Reformed." The name "The Lutheran and Reformed Church of America" would at least tell the American people what our union stands for. The official name of the Evangelical church in Austria is: The Evangelical church of the Augsburg and Helvetian confession." Such a prolonged name is impractical for America. But it leads to the right direction.

If we accept the proposed name we create within our own church body a promising field for progressive Lutherans who will not fail to prove to our people that originally they are not "Reformed". They will not fail in arousing the confessional conscious-

ness of our Lutheran-inclined people and our good intentions may be more disastrous to our Synod than we ever imagined.

If the Reformed brethren are sincere in their efforts of establishing an Evangelical church in America, they must in all fairness either insist that both historical names are mentioned in the official name, or they must be willing to surrender their own historical name, and adopt a name which will "include all those Protestant communions which are guided in the interest of a revival of a true Evangelical interpretation of Christianity." Are we ready for a "United Evangelical church of America"? Maybe there is more discussion, delay, and sometimes even considerable friction to be expected before a thorough understanding is reached. The great Greek theologian John Damascenus, has well said, "Union is the beginning of controversy." And the question whether the understanding should be reached before or after union is foremost a question as to the name of the proposed union.

# Die Lage in Deutschland.

Nach einer Darstellung von Dr. O. Dibelius.
Generalsuperintendent der Kurmark.

Verehrter, lieber Herr Doktor!

Ich will Ihnen kurz sagen, wie die Dinge in Deutschland liegen: Die Regierung Adolf Hitler wird heute — darüber kann gar kein Zweifel sein — von der erdrückenden Mehrheit des deutschen Volkes mit Vertrauen, ja mit Begeisterung getragen. Dr Umschwung der öffentlichen Meinung ist mit überwältigender Schnelligkeit vor sich gegangen. Die Gegner haben einen ernstlichen Widerstand nicht geleistet.

Wenn man das verstehen will, so muß man sich an folgendes erinnern:

Zunächst hat das **Diktat von Versailles** im deutschen Volk eine Bitterkeit zurückgelassen, die niemals überwunden worden ist, ja wohl auch niemals überwunden werden konnte. Wer von Berlin nach Königsberg fährt und dabei altes deutsches Gebiet im verschlossenen Wagen und unter polnischer Bewachung passieren muß, hat das unmittelbare Gefühl, daß hier unmögliche Zustände gewaltsam geschaffen worden sind. Wäre der Frieden anders gestaltet worden, wären die Versprechungen Wilsons aus dem Sommer 1918 gehalten worden, hätte man dem demokratischen Deutschland von 1918 irgendein Entgegenkommen bewiesen, so wäre vielleicht alles anders gelaufen. So aber stand das deutsche Volk fünfzehn Jahre lang unter dem Eindruck, daß die Abschaffung der Monarchie, die Verleugnung der deutschen Vergangenheit, die Herrschaft der Sozialisten die Lage Deutschlands nicht verbessert, sondern nur verschlechtert habe. So ist das Gefühl entstanden: auf diesem Weg ist keine Besserung zu erreichen! Deutschland wird immer nur betrogen! Das Wohlwollen andrer Mächte hilft uns auch nicht den leisesten Schritt weiter. Es kann nur anders werden durch einen neuen Willen zur Selbstbehauptung und zur politischen Macht. Der Völkerbund und alle andern internationalen Abmachungen bedeuten praktisch nichts anderes, als daß die Vormachtstellung Frankreichs auf dem Kontinent verewigt wird. Ohne Macht gibt es für Deutschland keine Gerechtigkeit auf der Welt!

Dazu kommt ein Zweites. Sie wissen, daß die **Judenfrage** in Deutschland immer eine gewisse Rolle gespielt hat. Das liegt daran, daß wir den großen Rekrutierungsgebieten des Judentums in Osteuropa geographisch sehr nahe sind. Wenn der Jude von Galizien nach Amerika auswandert, tritt er in eine neue Welt und ordnet sich dieser neuen Welt ein. Wenn er nach Deutschland oder Oesterreich zieht, bleibt er seiner Heimat nahe und bleibt, was er war.

Eine Jahrzehnte lange Erfahrung hat gezeigt, daß der jüdische Einfluß gerade in Deutschland überwiegend sittlich zersetzend wirkt.

Daher der Antisemitismus, der in Deutschland immer vorhanden war, der zeitweilig zurücktrat und zu andern Zeiten stark hervorbrach. Ich brauche nur an den Kampf Adolf Stöckers gegen das Judentum zu erinnern.

Nun kam die Revolution von 1918. An dieser Revolution war das Judentum in Deutschland führend beteiligt — genau so, wie bei der bolschewistischen Revolution in Rußland auffallend viel Juden im Vordergrund gestanden haben. Diese jüdisch beeinflußte Führung des neuen Deutschlands ließ nun dem Judentum jede Förderung angedeihen. Sie öffnete die Ostgrenze weit für die jüdische Einwanderung. Zu Zehntausenden kamen sie jetzt nach Deutschland und machten in der Inflationszeit ihre Geschäfte. Die großen Skandal-Prozesse, die sich an die Namen Barmat, Sklarek, Kutisker usw. anknüpften, haben gezeigt, wie diese jüdischen Elemente skrupellos das Geld zusammenscharrten. Gleichzeitig drangen die Juden, namentlich in Berlin, in das öffentliche und wirtschaftliche Leben ein und besetzten dort die Posten in einem Ausmaß, das zu dem Prozentsatz der jüdischen Bevölkerung in schreiendem Mißverhältnis stand. An dem größten Berliner Gericht waren 400 jüdische Rechtsanwälte zugelassen und nur 240 christliche. Dabei haben wir nur 1 Prozent Juden in Deutschland! An den großen städtischen Krankenhäusern war es vielfach so, daß auf zehn jüdische Aerzte noch nicht ein christlicher kam. Diese jüdischen Kreise hingen fest zusammen und wandten einander jeden möglichen Vorteil zu. Ich habe es selbst erlebt, daß uns im Krieg, als eins unsrer kleinen Kinder schwer krank lag und ¼ Liter Milch täglich verschrieben bekam, auf dem Rathaus achselzuckend gesagt wurde: Wenn Sie keinen jüdischen Arzt haben, dann werden Sie die Milch niemals bekommen! Wir hatten keinen jüdischen Arzt und bekamen das bißchen Milch tatsächlich nicht!

Auch hier ist eine Bitterkeit der deutschen christlichen Bevölkerung emporgewachsen, die eines Tages zum Ausbruch kommen mußte.

Endlich ist Deutschland in diesen ganzen Jahren das Objekt der **bolschewistischen Propaganda** gewesen. Der Ausländer macht sich kaum eine Vorstellung davon, mit welchen Mitteln diese Propaganda eine neue Revolution in Deutschland vorbereitete. Die Kommunisten waren organisiert bis in jedes Dorf hinein. Sie hatten in jedem Betrieb ihre Zellen. Für jeden Häuserblock in der Großstadt gaben sie eigene Zeitungen heraus, die hektographisch vervielfältigt wurden. Inhalt dieser Propaganda waren immer gemeine Angriffe auf die Kirche, auf die Rechtsprechung, auf die Ehe usw. Neben der offenen Hetze standen die feineren Mittel der Film-

propaganda, der Theaterpropaganda und der gut ausgestatteten Witzblätter. Ueberall wurde in den Schmutz gezogen, was dem Christen heilig ist. Der Gedanke war der: wenn man den Menschen alle Heiligtümer und alle Autoritäten zerschlagen hat — dann ist das Feld frei für die bolschewistische Revolution!

Es ist uns allen seit Jahren klar gewesen, daß die Entscheidungsschlacht zwischen der abendländischen Zivilisation und zwischen dem Bolschewismus auf deutschem Boden geschlagen werden müsse. Wir waren auf einen Bürgerkrieg innerlich gerüstet. Vorspiele eines solchen Bürgerkrieges hatten wir in Bayern und in Thüringen bei den kommunistischen Aufständen schon gehabt. Wir wußten, wie ein solcher Bürgerkrieg aussieht. Um nur ein kleines Beispiel zu erwähnen: bei dem Aufstand von Max Hölz in Thüringen führte man die Geistlichen als Geiseln mit sich und stellte sie bei Gefechten in die vorderste Reihe als Kugelfang! Die Frage konnte nur die sein: warten wir darauf, daß die Bolschewisten losschlagen, oder steht das deutsche Volk auf und jagt die Bolschewisten wieder dahin, wohin sie gehören?

Das war die Lage! Diese Lage spitzte sich schließlich dadurch zu, daß die deutschen Parlamente nicht mehr arbeitsfähig waren. Koalitionen, hinter denen die Mehrheit der Bevölkerung stand, kamen nicht mehr zustande. Es zeigte sich, daß das parlamentarische System, wie es in England und in Frankreich besteht, für Deutschland unmöglich ist. Man mußte mit Notverordnungen arbeiten. Es wurde immer schwieriger, bei der Regierung Deutschlands einigermaßen den Rechtsstandpunkt zu wahren. Da entschied sich schließlich der Reichspräsident von Hindenburg, alle seine Bedenken zurückzustellen und Adolf Hitler mit der Kabinettsbildung zu beauftragen.

Und nun spielten sich die Dinge in rasendem Tempo ab. Die Ventile waren geöffnet. Es zeigte sich, daß das deutsche Volk der alten Verhältnisse müde war. Mit jeder Woche wuchs die Anhängerschaft Adolf Hitlers weiter. Der 21. März, an dem die neue Regierung den Reichstag eröffnete, um sich ein Ermächtigungsgesetz geben zu lassen, wurde zu einem Festtag für das deutsche Volk. Die Ermächtigung wurde ausgesprochen. Heute regiert Adolf Hitler in Deutschland mit diktatorischer Vollmacht.

Das ist für Deutschland ein Zustand, den wir seit fast hundert Jahren nicht mehr gekannt haben. Wir haben ja nie einer Regierung die Vollmachten gegeben, die etwa der Präsident der Vereinigten Staaten hat. Es ist vielen sauer geworden, sich an diesen Zustand zu gewöhnen. Es kann auch nicht meine Aufgabe sein, alles rechtfertigen zu wollen, was die Regierung getan hat. Nur zweierlei muß ich sagen: Wenn man den blutigen Bürgerkrieg in Deutschland für unvermeidbar gehalten hat und nun den Umschwung vom März und April 1933 betrachtet — dann kann man sich nicht ge-

nug darüber wundern, wie unblutig er verlaufen ist! Gewiß sind Mißhandlungen vorgekommen und mancherlei andre unerfreuliche Dinge. Wo ist eine Revolution in der Welt, die ohne etwas Derartiges verliefe? Aber man vergleiche die Art, in der der Umsturz in andern Ländern vor sich gegangen ist — in Rußland oder zuletzt noch in Spanien! Man denke auch an die deutsche Revolution von 1918! Niemals ist alles, aufs Ganze gesehen, so diszipliniert verlaufen wie diesmal bei uns.

Dazu kommt, daß nach der Annahme des Ermächtigungsgesetzes der ganze alte deutsche Föderalismus, der unsre Geschichte seit tausend Jahren bestimmt hat, mit einem Federstrich beseitigt worden ist. Wir sind heute ein einiges deutsches Volk, wie wir es noch niemals gewesen sind. Endlich hat die soziale Haltung der neuen Regierung außerordentlich gewirkt. Adolf Hitler ist ein Mann aus dem Volk. Zu ihm haben auch die Arbeiter Vertrauen. Die ganze Theorie der Sozialdemokraten vom Klassenkampf ist beseitigt. So wie beim Militär und in der SA die Männer aller Bevölkerungsschichten beieinander stehen und doch die Führereigenschaften der Bildung willig anerkannt werden, so ist jetzt in Deutschland ein Gemeinsinn im Aufsteigen, der dem ewigen Krieg zwischen Arbeitgebern und Arbeitnehmern ein Ende gemacht hat.

Für unsre evangelische Kirche ergeben sich aus dieser neuen Lage gewiß mancherlei Sorgen und Schwierigkeiten. Es hat nicht an solchen gefehlt, die nun auch die evangelische Kirche „gleichschalten" wollten, wie der moderne Ausdruck heißt. Und selbstverständlich ist in einer nationalen Revolution mancherlei, was sich mit dem Wesen einer evangelischen Kirche schwer oder gar nicht verträgt. Wir sind in diesen letzten Wochen infolgedessen durch mancherlei Kämpfe und Unruhen hindurch gegangen. Aber Adolf Hitler ist eine religiöse Natur. Er weiß, daß es einen neuen Geist in Deutschland nicht geben kann, wenn nicht der christliche Glaube seine Mission an den Menschenherzen übt. Er hat infolgedessen Schwierigkeiten, die sich zwischen nationalsozialistischen Beamten und zwischen der evangelischen Kirche ergaben, sofort wieder ausgeglichen. Die Kirche wird im neuen Deutschland größere Wirkungsmöglichkeiten haben als im alten. Daran ist gar kein Zweifel. Sie wird auch die Gelegenheit ergreifen, um an der kirchlichen Organisation jetzt manches zu ändern, was bisher unerfüllbare Sehnsucht gewesen ist. Vor allem werden die deutschen evangelischen Kirchen sich fester zusammenschließen als bisher. Eine einheitliche Reichskirche werden wir noch nicht werden. Dagegen sprechen mancherlei Bedenken. Aber aus dem losen Kirchenbund wird eine straffe und handlungsfähige Organisation werden.

Ich selbst bin Gegenstand von mancherlei Anfeindungen gewesen. Ich gelte bei uns als derjenige, der die Unabhängigkeit der

Kirche gegenüber dem Staat am bestimmtesten vertritt. Das wird von manchen als Unfreundlichkeit gegenüber dem neuen Staat aufgefaßt. Wo die politischen Leidenschaften so stark wachgerufen worden sind, fehlt es oft an dem rechten Verständnis für das, was eine Kirche ist. Aber Sie dürfen versichert sein, daß ich von meiner Haltung nicht einen Schritt weichen werde. Ich habe aber die feste Zuversicht, daß die Kämpfe, die jetzt geführt worden sind, bald zum Schweigen gebracht sein werden. Die nationalsozialistische Gruppe der „Deutschen Christen," die jetzt in unsrer Kirche vorstoßen, wird sich bald zu positiver und fruchtbarer Arbeit in den Organismus unsrer Kirche eingliedern. Es ist eben doch das Evangelium, um das es uns allen geht. In diesem Evangelium liegen Kräfte, die auf die Dauer stärker sind als die politischen Leidenschaften. Ich bin daher auch für unsre Kirche guter und froher Zuversicht. Sie wird durch die Ergeignisse der Zeit von neuem aufgerüttelt. Sie wird sich ihrer missionarischen Aufgabe von neuem bewußt werden. Sie wird aktiver werden, als sie es bisher gewesen ist. Ich überschätze die Bedeutung festlicher Gottesdienste bei besonderen Gelegenheiten nicht einen Augenblick. Aber wenn man den Zustand von heute mit dem Zustand von früher vergleicht, wenn man denkt, wie in diesem Jahr am 1. Mai Millionen von Arbeitern in die Kirchen geströmt sind, während sie sonst mit gehässigen Inschriften auf der Straße demonstrierten — dann muß man sich doch sagen: es ist ein guter Geist wach geworden! Ein evangelischer Christ kann diese Entwicklung nur mit Dank und Freude betrachten!

Wir wissen wohl, daß man draußen in der Welt diese Vorgänge nicht versteht und daß die Atmosphäre gegenüber Deutschland sehr unfreundlich geworden ist. Das müssen wir tragen und müssen hoffen, daß das einmal wieder anders werden wird. Wer aber draußen etwas von Deutschland weiß, der möge das Vertrauen haben, daß das deutsche Volk sich selbst wiedergefunden hat und daß wir am Anfang von etwas Wertvollem und Zukunftskräftigem stehen. Ohne Härten und ohne Nöte geht keine große politische Aenderung vor sich. Aber man muß solche Härten tragen, wenn das Ganze gesund ist!

Von diesem Brief dürfen Sie jeden Gebrauch machen.

Mit herzlichem Gruß Ihr getreuer Dibelius.

Berlin-Steglitz, am 2. Mai 1933.

# Die Betätigung des christlichen Charakters in der „Sozialen Frage."

Von Prof. Dr. Grützmacher.

Einen Uebergang von den Grundbegriffen des wirtschaftlichen Lebens, Arbeit, Beruf, Eigentum zu den besonderen Verwicklungen der Gegenwart, die zur „Sozialen Frage" geführt haben, kann die Tatsache bilden, daß das Eigentum in der neueren Zeit in weitgehendem Maß den Charakter des **Kapitales** gewonnen hat. Durch die Arbeit entstehen Güter, die ihrerseits wieder zur Erzeugung neuer wirtschaftlicher Werte benutzt werden können. Die durch Arbeit erzeugte Axt dient dazu, weitere Bäume zu fällen. „Sobald der Mensch seine Arbeit so planvoll einrichtet, daß er mit dem Ergebnis früherer Arbeit spätere Arbeitsleistung erleichtert, bedient er sich der Hilfe des Kapitals. Denn dies ist im Grund genommen nichts anders als das Ergebnis früheren Zusammenwirkens mit der Natur, das sich in bestimmten Gütern dauerhaft darstellt." In diesem Sinn ist Kapital eine notwendige und allgemeine Erscheinung des wirtschaftlichen Lebens überhaupt; auch der Nomade besitzt Kapital in der von ihm aufgezogenen Viehherde, die zur Erzeugung neuer Tiere dient. **In der neueren Zeit aber hat sich das Kapital quantitativ außerordentlich erhöht, und seine Bedeutung übertrifft vielfach im Wirtschaftsprozeß die mehr und mehr zurücktretende Natur und macht die Arbeit ganz von sich abhängig.** Dazu hat das Kapital zur Erleichterung seiner Aufbewahrung und Verwertung immer mehr die Form des Geldes angenommen, das ursprünglich nur eine bequemere Form für den Gütertausch darstellte. Jetzt aber ist **das Geld der Repräsentant des Kapitals und damit ein Hauptmittel für die Gestaltung des Wirtschaftslebens.** Der besondere Ertrag, den das meist in Geld umgesetzte Kapital bringt ist der **Zins.** Dieser Zins hat gegenwertig einen ganz andern Sinn gewonnen, als zur Zeit Jesu. Jesus gab in Lukas 6, 34 ein absolutes Zinsverbot. Dementsprechend hat auch die Kirche viele Jahrhunderte offiziell jeden Zins verboten, freilich auf allerlei Umwegen ihn doch wieder gestattet. Allein **bei Jesu Zinsverbot handelt es sich um Liebesdarlehen, welche die Not des Nächsten lindern sollen.** Diese würde durch eine Zinserhebung gesteigert und ausgenützt werden und darum wider die Liebe sein. Wo diese Voraussetzung zutrifft, gilt noch heute für den Christen das Zinsverbot in voller Schärfe. Die meisten modernen Darlehen im Wirtschaftsleben werden dagegen durchaus nicht aus Not, sondern zum Zweck eines größeren Gewinnes aufgenommen. In solchen Fällen aber, wo der andre mit meinem Geld reichlich verdient, ist auch vom christlichen

Standpunkt aus kein Grund gegeben, von ihm nicht einen entsprechenden Anteil in der Form des Zinses zu empfangen.

Löst sich die Zinsfrage unter ethischen Gesichtspunkten ganz einfach, so ist das bei der sogenannten **„Sozialen Frage"** durchaus nicht der Fall. Unter ihr ist im weiteren Sinn die Frage nach der besten Form der menschlichen Gesellschaft, besonders auf wirtschaftlichem Gebiet zu verstehen. Als solche hat sie zahlreiche und wechselnde Unterprobleme, etwa das Verhältnis von Industrie und Landwirtschaft, von Handwerk und Warenhaus. **Im engsten und vordringlichsten Sinn für die Gegenwart handelt es sich um die Frage der Eingliederung des sogenannten vierten Standes d. h. des Handarbeiters in das Ganze des wirtschaftlichen Lebens durch Beseitigung seiner Nöte und Befriedigung seiner Ansprüche.** In diesem Sinn hat sich die „Soziale Frage" wesentlich erst im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert immer schärfer erhoben und zunächst in den am meisten industrialisierten Ländern wie England, Deutschland, Nordamerika, heute aber fast die ganze Erdenwelt, auch die asiatische, in Mitleidenschaft gezogen. Durch die Industrialisierung haben sich für die Arbeiter besondere Notstände ergeben, die man am kürzesten an ihrem Verhältnis zu Arbeit, Beruf, Eigentum veranschaulichen kann. Die Handarbeit ist im Unterschied zum Handwerk, ja selbst zur Landarbeit eine ganz mechanische geworden. Derselbe Handgriff wird immer wieder vollzogen und zwar — wenigstens bis vor kurzer Zeit — in außerordentlich ausgedehnter Dauer und vielfach unter sehr ungünstigen gesundheitlichen Bedingungen. Geistige Selbständigkeit ist bei dieser Arbeitsform ganz ausgeschlossen. Darum kann der auf sie begründete Beruf den ganzen Menschen nicht befriedigen und als die Hauptform eines lebenswürdigen Daseins erscheinen. Dazu erwirbt der Arbeiter mit seiner Leistung nur Lohn, aber in der Regel kein Eigentum. Wenn auch in überspitzter Form formuliert das sogenannte eherne Lohngesetz den Tatbestand: „Der durchschnittliche Arbeitslohn bleibt immer auf den notwendigen Lebensunterhalt reduziert, der in einem Volk gewohnheitsmäßig zur Fristung der Existenz und zur Fortpflanzung erforderlich ist." Jedenfalls erwirbt der Arbeiter kein Eigentum in dem Sinn, daß es seine Existenz dauernd auch in Zeiten von Arbeitslosigkeit sicherstellt. Er hat keinen Anteil am Kapital weder in der Form der Produktionsmittel noch des Geldes. Seine Arbeitsbedingungen wurden — wenigstens in früherer Zeit — einseitig durch den Besitzer des Kapitals festgelegt. Diese wirtschaftlichen Nöte und Einengungen wirken auf die gesamten Lebensverhältnisse, wie das Familienleben, die Anteilnahme oder richtiger den Ausschluß von den höheren Kulturgütern in Kunst und Wissenschaft. Die Gleichberechtigung auf politischem Gebiet — etwa durch Besitz des gleichen Wahlrechtes —, hat die wirtschaftliche Abhängigkeit noch fühlbarer gemacht. Diese

Notlage des modernen Arbeiters hat schon das „Kommunistische Manifest" von Marx und Engels 1848, die eigentliche Magna Charta der modernen Arbeiterbewegung bis zur Gegenwart, scharf dahin zusammengefaßt: „Die Klasse des modernen Arbeiters lebt nur so lange, als sie Arbeit findet, und sie findet nur so lange Arbeit, als ihre Arbeit das Kapital vermehrt. Die Arbeit der Proletarier hat durch die Ausdehnung der Maschinen und der Teilung der Arbeit allen selbständigen Charakter und damit allen Reiz für den Arbeiter verloren. Er wird ein bloßes Zubehör der Maschine. Der Proletarier ist eigentumslos; sein Verhältnis zu Weib und Kindern hat nichts mehr gemein mit dem bürgerlichen Familienverhältnis."

Diese realen Notstände, selbst wenn sie in einem oder anderm Land bei einer besonderen Konjunktur-Periode weniger drückend wurden, verlangen Abhilfe. Denn vom christlich-religiösem Standpunkt können sie durchaus nicht als Ausdruck unabänderlichen göttlichen Willens angesehen werden. Gewiß kann ein einzelner Charakter auch diesen Zustand wie jedes schwere Schicksal ertragen, aber der ganze Stand und die Gesellschaft hat keine Verpflichtung, diese modernen Komplikationen als unabänderlich hinzunehmen. Sind sie doch einerseits nur Ergebnisse besondrer Formen des modernen wirtschaftlichen Lebens wie des Aufkommens der Maschine, anderseits aber auch deutliches Produkt der Sünde d. h. des egoistischen Willens von Menschen und Ständen, die sich einen großen unverhältnismäßigen Anteil der wirtschaftlichen Güter, besonders von Kapital und Geld, sichern und die andern durch ihre Machtstellung in jeder Richtung beschränken. **Infolgedessen haben im Prinzip alle Versuche, die auf eine Lösung der „Sozialen Frage" hindrängen, Anspruch auf das sympathische Interesse und die Mitarbeit des christlichen Charakters.**

Die Lösungsversuche der modernen „Sozialen Frage," die ernstlicher um die Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts einsetzen, erwachsen, sowohl im Arbeiterstande wie auch außerhalb seiner, wenn auch zunächst wesentlich nur bei einer Reihe gerade religiös gerichteter Persönlichkeiten. **Die erstere Bewegung kann man kurz die sozialistische, die zweite die christlich-soziale nennen.** Der Sozialismus hat von Anfang an nicht nur den Charakter einer wirtschaftlichen, sondern auch einer weltanschaulichen Bewegung getragen. Erklärt doch das Kommunistische Manifest: „Für den Proletarier sind die Gesetze, die Moral, die Religion ebensoviele bürgerliche Vorurteile, hinter denen sich ebensoviele bürgerliche Interessen verstecken." **Diese Behauptung hat ihr Fundament in der sogenannten materialistischen Geschichtsbetrachtung, die das weltanschauliche Rückgrat der ganzen Bewegung bis zum Bolschewismus bildet.** Marx formuliert sie dahin: „Meine Untersuchung mündete in dem Ergebnis, daß Rechts-

verhältnisse und Staatsform weder aus sich selbst zu begreifen sind, noch aus der sogenannten allgemeinen Entwicklung des menschlichen Geistes, sondern vielmehr in den materiellen Lebensverhältnissen wurzeln. Die Gesamtheit der materiellen Produktionsverhältnisse bildet die ökonomische Struktur der Gesellschaft, die reale Basis, worauf sich ein juristischer und politischer Ueberbau erhebt und welchem bestimmte gesellschaftliche Bewußtseinsformeln entsprechen." Kurz und schroff zusammengefaßt **besagt diese Theorie, daß Recht, Politik, Wissenschaft, Philosophie, Kunst und gerade auch Religion keine selbständigen Erscheinungen sind, sondern nur Produkte und Reflexe der jeweiligen wirtschaftlichen Verhältnisse,** mit deren Aenderung auch sie sich wandeln müssen. In besonderen Schriften hat Kautsky zu beweisen gesucht, das ganze Urchristentum wurzele in einer proletarischen, die Reformation in einer bäuerlichen Revolution. Nüchterne Nachprüfungen durch den Nationalökonomen Max Weber und durch Tröltsch hat erwiesen, **daß Religion und wirtschaftliches Leben durchaus selbständige Größen sind, wohl aber vielfach in der Geschichte eine Wechselwirkung betätigt haben. Der radikalen Abhängigmachung der Religion vom wirtschaftlichen Leben muß der christliche Charakter entschieden widersprechen** und sich gegen alle Bewegungen wenden, die diesen Grundsatz wie der Bolschewismus praktisch durchführen, indem sie mit der Aenderung der wirtschaftlichen Formen auch die gesamte bisherige Religion erledigen wollen. **Aber auch mit der Milderung des Gegensatzes zur Religion, wie sie die deutsche Sozialdemokratie in ihrem Erfurter Programm von 1891 formulierte: „Religion ist Privatsache" kann sich der christliche Charakter nicht zufrieden geben.** Denn einmal lautete die Ergänzung für viele Jahrzehnte auch der deutschen sozialistischen Bewegung praktisch dahin: Atheismus ist Parteisache. Hätte sich doch die Partei mit antireligiösen Bewegungen aufs Engste verknüpft, wie es noch heute der Bolschewismus mit der Gottlosenbewegung tut. Dazu enthält der Satz: Religion ist Privatsache, nur die halbe Wahrheit, daß jene zunächst Sache der einzelnen Seele ist, leugnet aber ab, daß die Religion im öffentlichen und gerade auch im wirtschaftlichen Leben sich geltend zu machen hat. Tut sie das nicht, so treten andre Kräfte und Ziele an ihre Stelle wie der langjährige Führer der deutschen Sozialdemokratie, Bebel, offen erklärte: „Sie wissen, daß je mehr der Glaube an das jenseitige Leben bei den Massen schwindet, die Massen um so nachdrücklicher verlangen, daß sie ihren Himmel auf der Erde finden." Der moderne Sozialismus nimmt deutlich, wenn auch in stark säkularisierter Form, die Ziele des alten Chiliasmus auf, den Himmel auf die Erde zu verlegen. Auch dagegen muß die christliche Religion um der Transzendenz willen Einspruch erheben.

Erhebt so das Christentum starke Bedenken gegen die mit dem

Sozialismus vielfach verbundene Weltanschauung, so ist das durchaus nicht in gleichem Maß gegenüber seinen **wirtschaftlichen Forderungen** der Fall. Diese sind auf ihre praktische Durchführbarkeit zu prüfen und können sich zu einem guten Teil auch mit einer christlichen Weltanschauung verbinden. Die wirtschaftlichen Ziele hat im Anschluß, wenn auch in Milderung des kommunistischen Manifestes, die deutsche Sozialdemokratie dahin formuliert: „Die Verwandlung des kapitalistischen Privateigentums an Produktionsmitteln in gesellschaftliches Eigentum und die Umwandlung der Warenproduktion in sozialistische." Diese Entwicklung soll sich notwendig aus dem kapitalistischen System ergeben, die entweder auf friedlichem Weg oder durch Unterstützung einer gewaltsamen Revolution sich vollziehen soll. In dieser sozialistischen Zukunftsordnung soll jede Klassenherrschaft aufhören und eine demokratische Gleichheit der Rechte und Pflichten für alle ohne Unterschied des Geschlechtes und der Abstammung eintreten. Der radikale Sozialismus, jetzt Kommunismus oder Bolschewismus genannt, will jedoch die Herrschaft der Bourgoisie durch eine Diktatur des Proletariats d. h. durch eine umgekehrte Klassenherrschaft ersetzen.

Beginnen wir mit der **christlichen Stellungnahme** zu der letzteren Anschauung, so wird diese **sich gegen jede Klassenherrschaft wenden, welche eine Schicht durch die andre wirtschaftlich und damit auch in andern Sphären unterjochen will.** Eine Diktatur des Proletariates würde mindestens ähnliche Notstände erzeugen, wie die des Kapitalismus und ist darum ebenso unethisch wie jene. **Das christliche Ideal deckt sich mit dem Gedanken eines klassenlosen d. h. einer die verschiedenen Stände nicht feindlich gegeneinander abschließenden Gesellschaft auch im Bereich der Wirtschaft.** Diese wird durch Verbindung von Arbeitgebern und Arbeitnehmern, durch Abschluß von Verträgen, wie durch Schlichtungsausschüsse bei etwaigen Streitigkeiten charakterisiert sein, ohne daß die christliche Ethik hier im Einzelnen Vorschriften zu geben hätte. Dies Prinzip haben schon die deutschen christlichen Gewerkschaften klar in dem Satz entwickelt: „Die gesamte Tätigkeit ist getragen von der Anerkennung der gleichen beiderseitigen Rechte und Pflichten von Arbeitgebern und Arbeitnehmern. Arbeit und Kapital sind aufeinander angewiesene Faktoren der Produktion." In dieser Richtung wird sich auch nötigenfalls die übergeordnete politische Macht des Staates einzusetzen haben. Die Herbeiführung neuer sozialer Verhältnisse auf dem Weg allmählicher Entwicklung und gesetzlicher Umgestaltung liegt dem Christen am nächsten; seine Stellungnahme zur Revolution, die noch stärker politischen als wirtschaftlichen Charakter zu tragen pflegt, wird erst bei der Staatsethik zu entwickeln sein. Wirtschaftlichen Revolutionen kommen **Streiks** auf Seiten der Arbeitnehmer, **Aussperrungen** auf Seiten der Arbeitgeber nahe. Grundlos und

egoistisch vom Zaun gebrochen wird sie der christliche Charakter nicht mitmachen. Dagegen bei einem Lohndruck, der dem Arbeiter nicht mehr sein Existenzminimum garantiert, steht dieser vor der Frage, ob er einer — vielfach auch formal-rechtlich fragwürdigen — Arbeitspflicht genügen soll oder durch Arbeitsniederlegung sein und seiner Familie Lebensrecht zu verteidigen hat. Aehnliche Fälle können für Arbeitgeber eintreten, wenn Lieferungen zum Besten der Gesamtheit durch Streiks gefährdet sind. **Man wird hier Pflichtkollisionen zu konstatieren haben, in welchen tatsächlich eine Pflicht nur auf Kosten der andern erfüllt werden kann.** Sie sind niemals rein ethisch d. h. nicht ohne Sünde lösbar und werden nur faktisch durch die jeweils stärkere Neigung zu der einen oder andern Pflicht entschieden.

**Die Frage nach der Verstaatlichung der Produktionsmittel und des Betriebskapitals ist eine ethisch neutrale, die nach wirtschaftlichen Gesichtspunkten zu entscheiden ist.** Im Lauf der Zeit sind — verschieden in den einzelnen Ländern — eine ganze Reihe von zunächst privatwirtschaftlichen Betrieben in gemeinwirtschaftliche umgewandelt wie z. B. Post und Eisenbahn. Ihre in der Regel großen Gewinne fallen nicht mehr Einzelnen, sondern der Gesamtheit zu. Eine Ausdehnung etwa auf Bergwerke scheint wohl möglich. Umgekehrt wird der Staat dafür zu sorgen haben, daß nicht durch Zusammenschlüsse privatwirtschaftlicher Unternehmungen zu großen Trusts Arbeiter und Angestellte um jede Selbständigkeit gebracht und auch die Preise für notwendige Bedarfsgüter zum Schaden der Allgemeinheit gesteigert werden. So hat der christliche Charakter Sozialisierungsbestrebungen gegenüber sich geneigt zu verhalten, ohne von sich aus die einzelnen Maßnahmen zu bestimmen. Auf der andern Seite wird er auch die früher schon zu Gunsten von Privateigentum geltend gemachten Gesichtspunkte: Freiheit der einzelnen Persönlichkeit und Möglichkeit zur Liebesübung, gegenüber dem Kommunismus mit seiner restlosen Beseitigung des Privateigentumes aufrecht erhalten. Eine Beteiligung der Arbeiterschaft am Kapital kann auch ohne radikalen Kommunismus durchgeführt werden, indem ihr ein prozentualer Gewinn am Unternehmen zugesichert wird, wie das schon einige größere Unternehmungen — in Deutschland z. B. die Zeiswerke in Jena — versucht haben.

**Der christliche Charakter wird auch alle die Mittel der Selbst-, Gemeinschafts- und Staatshilfe billigen, die den Arbeiter gegen Krankheit, Alter wie unverschuldete Arbeitslosigkeit sichern.** Die in der sozialen Botschaft Kaiser Wilhelms I. 1881 begonnene Sozialversicherung hat Bismarck als „in den sittlichen Fundamenten des christlichen Volkslebens gesetzt" bezeichnet.

Derartige Maßnahmen des Staates werden aber nicht erreicht, wenn nicht maßgebende Persönlichkeiten für sie gewonnen werden

oder in parlamentarisch regierten Staaten die entscheidenden Parteien. **Darum bedarf es einer christlich-sozialen Politik.** Sie hat in Deutschland besonders Hofprediger Stöcker mit seiner 1878 gegründeten Christlich-sozialen Partei begonnen. Eine solche Partei wird die Prinzipien des Christentums mit konkreten Forderungen zu verbinden haben. Dadurch aber kann leicht der Anschein entstehen, als ob die letzteren ebenso absolut im Christentum begründet seien, wie die ersteren. Das aber würde bedeuten, das Evangelium wieder zu einem Gesetz zu machen.

Das alte Testament enthält zwar auch in wirtschaftlicher Richtung eine ganze Reihe von — zum Teil allerdings nie durchgeführten — Forderungen wie die des Jubeljahres. Das Neue Testament dagegen verzichtete — wie schon früher im Bezug auf Jesus ausgeführt wurde — auf jede gesetzliche Regelung des wirtschaftlichen Lebens. **Darum wird nichts anders übrig bleiben als aus der Gesinnung Jesu heraus die der jeweiligen Situation angepaßten Durchführungen sozialer Grundsätze nach bestem Wissen und Gewissen zu versuchen, ohne für sie Unfehlbarkeit in Anspruch zu nehmen.** Eine besondere christlich-soziale Partei erweckt leicht den Anschein, christliche Patentlösungen zu besitzen, denen gegenüber die sozialen Vorschläge andrer Parteien als nicht-christlich erscheinen. **Auf jeden Fall wird die in erster Linie zur Vertretung des Christentums berufene Kirche und in ihr wieder deren offizielle Vertreter, die Geistlichen, bei der Stellungnahme zu wirtschaftlichen Einzelproblemen große Zurückhaltung üben müssen.** Denn einmal ist hier eine sehr gründliche Kenntnis der Nationalökonomie und weitgehende praktische Erfahrung nötig, die man kaum neben einem ernstlichen theologischen Studium und einer eifrigen pfarramtlichen Tätigkeit erwerben kann. Sodann besteht die Gefahr, daß Kirche und Pfarrer als Vertreter einer bestimmten Partei erscheinen und damit auf der einen Seite das Vertrauen verlieren, was sie auf der andern Seite vielleicht gewinnen. Beider Aufgabe wird sich in erster Linie darauf zu konzentrieren haben, allen Ständen in gleicher Weise die ethischen Forderungen des Evangeliums auch in ihrer Anwendung auf das wirtschaftliche Leben zu verkünden. Dagegen werden Kirche und Pfarrer in wirtschaftlichen Einzelfragen — und sagen wir vorblickend auch in politischen — eine gewisse Askese üben müssen, um Allen Alles sein zu können.

# Spinozas Leben und Lehre.

Von Dr. C. Schieler.

In das Jahr 1932 fiel die dreihundertste Wiederkehr der Geburt des bedeutenden Philosophen **Spinoza**. Da dieser aber dem wissenschaftlichen, philosophischen Denken durch ein neues System einen kräftigen Impuls gegeben, so daß sein Name unter den großen Denkern eine ehrenvolle Stelle einnimmt, so geziemt es sich, daß „das Theologische Magazin" seiner in einem besonderen Artikel gedenkt, um die Aufmerksamkeit der Leser auf die Geistesarbeit dieses seltenen Gelehrten hinzulenken. Die Geschichte der Philosophie zeigt deutlich die notwendige Fortentwicklung der Gedanken. Aber wir dürfen über dieser Notwendigkeit den persönlichen Anteil der einzelnen Philosophen nicht vernachlässigen. Spinoza geht von Descartes aus; er erkannte bei aller Verehrung gegen diesen, folgerichtig denkend, die Widersprüche im System des Descartes und baute sein philosophisches System aus. Aber auch die nicht gewöhnlichen Lebensschicksale dieses Gelehrten waren nicht ohne bestimmenden Einfluß auf dasselbe. Darum zuerst

## Spinozas Lebensschicksale.

Die zahlreichen Juden, die seit den Zeiten arabischer Herrschaft in Spanien lebten, hatten im 16. Jahrhundert viele Verfolgungen zu erleiden. Durch Zwang zum Christentum bekehrt, blieben sie doch der Inquisition verdächtig, bloße Scheinchristen zu sein, und mußten fortwährend für ihr Leben fürchten. Eine Zuflucht bot sich ihnen zu Beginn des 17. Jahrhunderts in den Niederlanden, die selbst in hartem Kampf gegen Spanien sich die Freiheit protestantischer Religionsübung errungen hatten. Dort nahmen die spanischen Juden den Glauben ihrer Vorfahren wieder an und lebten streng nach den Gesetzen des Talmud. Als Sohn einer solchen Auswandererfamilie ist Baruch d' Espinoza (so lautete der Name ursprünglich) 1632 in einer der engen Gassen der Amsterdamer Judenstadt geboren. Diese Abkunft bestimmte seine Jugendeindrücke und seine erste Geistesbildung.

Um die Ueberlieferungen ihrer Religion aufrecht zu erhalten und neueren Geschlechtern mitzuteilen, gründeten die Juden Amsterdams eine Schule, zu deren Lehrern sie berühmte Rabbiner beriefen. Hier empfing Baruch d'Espinoza seine Jugendbildung, erlernte die hebräische Sprache, las Bibel und Talmud und übte an ihrer Auslegung seinen Scharfsinn. Seine Begabung wurde offenbar; und da ihm die Neigung zum Kaufmannsstand fehlte, wollte er sich ganz der jüdischen Theologie widmen. Seine Lehrer und die ganze Judenschaft erblickten schon in ihm die künftige Säule der Gemeinde. Aber die Hoffnungen der Rabbiner wurden bald zer-

stört, als Spinoza die Gedanken der neuen Philosophie kennen lernte. Auch in das abgeschlossenste Ghetto dringt etwas von den geistigen Bewegungen der Umwelt, und die Amsterdamer Juden standen doch — mochte auch ihr Privatleben noch so eingeschränkt sein — durch zwei große Kanäle mit dem Leben ihrer christlichen Zeitgenossen in Verbindung, nämlich durch den Handel und die Medizin. In empfänglichen Geistern entstand so ein Zwiespalt zwischen der überkommenen Religion und dem Wissen der Neuzeit.

Die Entwicklung des jungen Spinoza unter diesen Verhältnissen kennen wir nicht. Sicher ist nur, daß er frühzeitig Verlangen trug, die Wissenschaft der Neuzeit kennen zu lernen. Dazu mußte er aber die lateinische Sprache kennen, die noch durchaus die Sprache der Gelehrten war, in der jüdischen Schule aber keinen Gegenstand des Unterrichtes bildete. Er hatte Glück, einen tüchtigen Lehrer zu finden, der dem wissensdurstigen Jüngling mehr geben konnte, als Kenntnis des Lateinischen. Es war Franziskus van den Enden, der zwar Katholik war, aber dem Kirchenglauben entfremdet geworden, mit der Naturwissenschaft und der Philosophie des Descartes vertraut war. Bei ihm mag Spinoza die Schriften des Descartes zuerst gesehen und gleichzeitig seine Kenntnisse fremder Sprachen erweitert haben. Er war in dieser Beziehung von vorneherein begünstigt, denn neben seiner Muttersprache, dem Spanischen, war ihm naturgemäß von Jugend auf das Holländische bekannt. Dazu erlernte er noch die französische und italienische Sprache.

Die neue Bildung und die veränderten Verhältnisse trennten Spinoza von seinen Glaubensgenossen. Zwar lag es ihm fern, agitatorisch zu wirken, aber es war ihm auf die Dauer noch weniger möglich, bei gänzlich veränderten Ueberzeugungen die streng gebundene Lebensweise eines orthodoxen Juden zu führen. Mit dem Tod seines Vaters 1654 scheint für ihn der wichtigste Grund zu äußerer Anbequemung gefallen zu sein; seitdem besuchte er die Synagoge nicht mehr, übertrat die Speisegesetze und verkehrte viel mit freigesinnten Christen. Das erregte naturgemäß Anstoß. Aber die Juden hätten gern Aufsehen vermieden, fürchteten auch, daß das Verhalten eines Menschen, auf den die Rabbiner solche Hoffnungen setzten, Nachahmung finden würde. Man versuchte daher ihm mit Geld beizukommen und versprach ihm ein Jahresgehalt, wenn er sich wenigstens äußerlich der jüdischen Sitte fügen würde. Erst als Spinoza diesen schimpflichen Vorschlag zurückgewiesen hatte, wurde er als Abtrünniger verfolgt. Sein Schwager und seine Schwester machten seinen Abfall geltend, um ihm den Anspruch auf das väterliche Erbe streitig zu machen. Er nahm die holländischen Gerichte in Anspruch, siegte, wie zu erwarten war, und überließ dann freiwillig den Geschwistern das Erbe und behielt sich nichts vor als sein Bett.

Schließlich ergriffen die Rabbiner die äußersten Maßregeln gegen den Unbeugsamen, belegten ihn im Jahre 1656 mit dem **„großen Bann"** und stießen ihn feierlich aus der Gemeinschaft der Juden aus. Die von ihnen gebrauchte Bannformel stammte aus dem frühen Mittelalter. Einige der wichtigsten Sätze aus derselben mögen hier eine Stelle finden: „Nach dem Beschluß der Engel und dem Ausspruch der Heiligen, mit Zustimmung des heiligen Gottes und dieser ganzen Gemeinde bannen, verstoßen, verwünschen und verfluchen wir Baruch d'Espinoza." . . . „Verflucht sei er am Tag und verflucht sei er in der Nacht, verflucht beim Niederlegen und verflucht beim Aufstehen, verflucht bei seinem Ausgang und verflucht bei seinem Eingang. Gott möge ihm nie vergeben!" . . . „Wir verordnen, daß niemand mit ihm verkehre, nicht mündlich und nicht schriftlich, niemand ihm eine Gunst erweise, niemand unter einem Dach oder innerhalb vier Ellen mit ihm zusammen sei, niemand ein von ihm verfaßtes oder geschriebenes Werk lese." . . . Es ekelt einen an, solche gemeine Heuchelei, solche Intoleranz nur zu lesen. Ist es aber nicht mehr als auffallend, daß der sogenannte römische große Bann, wie er im römischen Ritual sich findet, ähnliche, vielleicht noch derbere Ausdrücke gegen den mit dem direkten Bann Belegten enthält? — Der Bann bedeutete für Spinoza die Trennung von allen Genossen seiner Jugend; wie es scheint, hat später kein Jude mehr zu seinem Umgangskreis gehört. Die Rabbiner verfolgten indessen ihn noch weiter; sie suchten auch seine bürgerliche Existenz zu vernichten, sie zeigten ihn der protestantischen Geistlichkeit als einen der Religion gefährlichen Menschen an und bewirkten seine Ausweisung aus Amsterdam. Sie erreichten jedoch nicht allzuviel damit, denn infolge der toleranten Haltung der weltlichen Behörden konnte er in einem Dorf, wenige Meilen von der Hauptstadt entfernt, ruhig wohnen.

Spinoza mußte nun seinem Leben eine andre äußere Gestaltung geben, war aber fest entschlossen, nichts gegen seine Ueberzeugung zu tun, dabei aber Streit mit seiner Umgebung möglichst zu vermeiden. Er trat nie zum Christentum über, da er bei aller Verehrung für die persönliche Hoheit und die Moral Christi sich nicht zu den Glaubensformeln einer christlichen Kirche bekennen konnte. Am nächsten stand er einigen Sekten, die gleich ihm nur in Holland Duldung fanden, Gemeinden, die den moralischen Lebenswandel für das Wesentliche am Christentum hielten und ihren Mitgliedern in dogmatischer Beziehung viel Freiheit ließen. Unter ihnen, den Mennoniten und Kollegianten, fand Spinoza Verkehr, ohne ihnen anzugehören.

Er war jetzt genötigt, durch seiner Hände Arbeit seinen Lebensunterhalt zu verdienen; denn er war mittellos, und jede öffentliche Anstellung, jede ausreichend bezahlte Unterrichtstätigkeit blieb ihm

verschlossen. Er nutzte seine naturwissenschaftlichen Kenntnisse aus und schliff optische Gläser für Brillen und Fernrohre, die damals infolge der astronomischen Entdeckungen sehr begehrt wurden, während nur wenige Männer imstand waren, die nötigen Linsen schleifen zu können. Spinoza verdankte also die Möglichkeit, sich sein Brot durch eigne Arbeit zu erwerben, der modernen Naturwissenschaft und nicht, wie man es manchmal liest, dem Talmud. Man behauptet nämlich, daß Spinoza einer Vorschrift des Talmud gefolgt sei, die von jedem Gelehrten die Erlernung eines Handwerks fordere. Aber es handelt sich dabei nicht um eine Vorschrift, sondern um einen Rat, der meist unbefolgt blieb, und vollends hätte Spinoza das Schleifen optischer Gläser nicht als Talmudschüler erlernen können.

## Spinozas literarische Arbeiten und deren Einfluß auf seinen Lebenslauf.

Alle Zeit, die ihm sein Handwerk ließ, widmete er seinen Studien. Höchst bescheiden lebte er anfangs in einem Dorf unweit Amsterdam, später bei Leyden, in der Nähe des Haag und schließlich im Haag. Zu dieser Zeit strebte die kalvinistische Geistlichkeit, der sich aus politischen Gründen das Haus der Oranier anschloß, die Alleinherrschaft ihrer Kirche zu erlangen. In diese Streitigkeiten griff Spinoza 1670 durch eine anonym erschienene Schrift, seinen **theologisch-politischen Traktat** ein. Wie der Name besagt, behandelt dieses Buch das Verhältnis der Theologie zur Politik, von Kirche und Staat, und zwar kämpft es für die Oberherrschaft des Staates gegen den politischen Einfluß der Geistlichkeit. Zugleich erschüttert Spinoza den Anspruch der Bibel, göttlichen Ursprungs zu sein, durch eine historische Kritik am Alten Testament, zu der seine jüdische Jugendbildung ihn befähigte. Die kühne Schrift erregte großes Aufsehen: Ebenso allgemin wie die Entrüstung war der Wunsch, sie zu lesen. Eine Fülle von Gegenschriften entstand, und der Verfasser, der trotz der Anonymität bald erkannt wurde, hatte die Folgen seines Unternehmens bald zu spüren. Persönliche Freunde wandten sich von ihm ab, zeitweise schien es, als solle mit dem Buch auch der Verfasser verfolgt werden. Vor ernsthafter Gefahr schützte ihn die Gönnerschaft des Jan de Wit, der damals wohl der mächtigste Mann in Holland war. Aber bald darauf verlor Jan de Wit seinen Einfluß, wurde verfolgt und infolge der Erbitterung des von Priestern aufgestachelten Volkes grausamst ermordet (1672). Hierüber heftig aufgebracht, hatte Spinoza seine philosophische Ruhe völlig verloren und seiner Entrüstung durch einen Schritt Ausdruck geben wollen, der einerseits ganz nutzlos gewesen wäre und ihn selber anderseits der Volkswut preisgegeben hätte. Sein Hausherr wurde seine Rettung, indem er ihn einschloß.

Ein anderes Werk Spinozas, eine **Darstellung der Philosophie des Deskartes,** das einzige, das zu seinen Lebzeiten unter seinem Namen erschien, verschaffte dem gebannten Juden einen Ruf an die Universität Heidelberg. Dieser Ruf war ein ehrenvolles Zeichen freier Gesinnung für den Landesherrn, den Kurfürsten Karl Ludwig von der Pfalz. Aber die Ausführung wäre auf die Dauer nicht möglich gewesen. Denn in dem an Spinoza gerichteten Brief stand neben der Zusicherung der Lehrfreiheit die Erwartung, daß er nichts gegen die Kirche sagen werde. Spinoza wußte, daß Konflikte nicht ausbleiben könnten, und in der klaren, ruhigen Weise, in der er seine persönlichen Angelegenheiten stets besorgte, lehnte er den Ruf ab. Sein Leben blieb unverändert, aber die doppelte Anstrengung geistiger und körperlicher Arbeit und der Glasstaub, der beim Schleifen entsteht, scheinen seiner zarten Natur geschadet zu haben; er wurde lungenkrank und starb 1677, erst 45 Jahre alt.

### Die wichtigsten Lehren Spinozas.

Bald nach seinen Tod wurden seine hinterlassenen Schriften, darunter sein Hauptwerk, **Ethik** d. h. **Lehre vom Sittlichen oder vom rechten Leben,** von seinen Freunden herausgegeben.

Zum besseren Verständnis diene die Bemerkung, daß Spinoza eine durch und durch religiöse Natur war, ganz erfüllt von dem Streben nach inniger Vereinigung mit der Gottheit. Im Dienst dieses Strebens stand für ihn die Erkenntnis. Ein sittlich religiöses Leben durch das Denken zu begründen, war tief in Spinozas Natur begründet.

Sodann beachte man, daß Spinozas Hauptwerk in einer eigentümlichen Form geschrieben ist. Da die Geometrie für ihn das Vorbild strenger, wissenschaftlicher Beweise war, bildete er seine Darstellung dem berühmten griechischen Lehrbuch der Geometrie, dem Werk des Euklid, nach. Wie ein Mathematiker beginnt er mit Grundsätzen, deren Wahrheit nach seiner Ueberzeugung selbstverständlich ist, und mit Erklärungen oder Definitionen der Grundbegriffe. Von diesen Voraussetzungen aus beweist er dann die einzelnen Lehrsätze. Und die Wahl der geometrischen Darstellung war keine willkürliche Laune Spinopas, sondern hängt mit seiner Lehre aufs engste zusammen.

### Lehre von Gott.

Spinoza geht von dem Gedanken aus, daß **die Gottheit das allervollkommenste Wesen ist.** Da in jeder Wirklichkeit eine Vollkommenheit liegt, muß alle wahre Wirklichkeit Gott angehören. Gott fällt so zusammen mit der Welt, denn unter Welt verstehen wir die Einheit, den inneren Zusammenhang aller Dinge. **Gott ist das All, das All ist Gott.** Da Gott das allervollkommenste Wesen ist und der Inbegriff alles Seins, so ist nichts außer ihm, er ist

das einzige, was Substanz heißen darf. Aus Wesen und Begriff dieser einzigen, unendlichen, alles umfassenden Substanz muß nun alles einzelne Sein und Geschehen mit mathematischer Notwendigkeit folgen. Die Schöpfung der Welt kann also Spinoza nicht als freie Tat Gottes ansehen, die seine Willkür auch hätte unterlassen können; vielmehr ist die Einheit der Welt selbst Gott, es gehört zum notwendigen Wesen Gottes, sich in dieser Welt darzustellen. Alles einzelne ist nur wirklich, sofern es an der Gottheit teil hat. Daß es ein Einzelnes ist, beruht auf seiner **Beschränktheit** und damit auf seiner **Verneinung.** Diese Gleichsetzung von Einzelheit, Beschränkung, die befremdend wirkt, läßt sich leicht erklären: Wir sind nur Mensch, indem wir nicht Tier, Pflanze oder Stein sind, wir können einen bestimmten Lebenslauf nur ergreifen, indem wir auf alle andern Möglichkeiten der Lebensgestaltung verzichten. So läßt sich der Satz, mit dessen Hilfe Spinoza die Besonderheit der einzelnen Wesen und der Einheit der Gottnatur herzuleiten sucht, verstehen: **„Alle Bestimmtheit ist Verneinung.**

Alle einzelnen Dinge, Körper wie Seelen, sind nur notwendige Folgen und Einschränkungen der einen wahrhaft wirklichen Gottnatur. Diese ist nun so beschaffen, daß sie sich in unendlich vielen Weisen entfaltet und offenbart. Uns sind nur zwei von diesen Grundeigenschaften oder Attributen der Gottheit zugänglich, die Ausdehnung oder die Körperwelt und das Denken oder die Welt des Geistes. Beide sind völlig unabhängig von einander; aber da beide derselben allumfassenden göttlichen Einheit angehören, herrscht in beiden die gleiche gesetzliche Ordnung. Nicht unser Gedanke oder Willensentschluß bewegt unsern Arm; aber es ist in der Einheit Gottes begründet, daß, wenn wir den Arm bewegen wollen, zugleich aus der Notwendigkeit des körperlichen Geschehens eine Gehirnbewegung folgt, die Ursache der Armbewegung wird. Aber da Bewegungen und Gedanken aus derselben göttlichen Notwendigkeit folgen, ist **die Ordnung und Verknüpfung der körperlichen Dinge dieselbe wie die Ordnung und Verknüpfung der Gedaken.**

In der streng einheitlichen und geordneten Welt ist kein Platz für die Freiheit des Willens. Folgt ja jede Regung unsrer Seele ebenso unbedingt mathematisch aus Gottes Entfaltungsweise oder Attribut des Denkens, wie der Fall eines geworfenen Steines aus Gottes Attribut der Ausdehnung folgt. Unsre Taten und Gedanken sind durch den göttlich natürlichen Zusammenhang so notwendig bestimmt, wie die Umdrehung der Erde oder der Fall des Steines.

### Ethische Grundsätze und Lehren.

„Die Ethik ist die Erkenntnis vom richtigen Verhalten des Einzelnen zu sich selber und zu den andern Einzelnen." Die Tiere und tatsächlich auch die meisten Menschen werden in ihrem Handeln

durch Affekte bestimmt. Kränkung mit Kränkung zu erwiedern bewegt sie der Zorn, den Notleidenden zu Hilfe zu kommen das Mitleid und sofort. Der Weise dagegen lebt nach Anleitung der Vernunft, er allein trifft sicher das Ziel der Selbsterhaltung, wogegen die von den Affekten Geleiteten es oft verfehlen: die Rachsucht, die Ehrsucht, die Habsucht, die Vergnügungssucht und wie sie alle heißen, führen häufig ins Verderben. Der durch Vernunft Geleitete dagegen kennt Wert und Maß der Dinge, wie fern sie zuträglich, wiefern sie verderblich sind. Er sieht, daß durch Vergeltung des Bösen mit Bösem dauernde Feindschaft mit gegenseitiger Bedrohung, Störung, ja Vernichtung erwächst, daß dagegen durch Gelassenheit und Großmut der Haß überwunden und Liebe und Freundschaft hervorgebracht werden kann.

Auf Grund derselben Erkenntnis von der menschlichen Natur zeigt die Politik, wie das Zusammenleben vieler zu gestalten sei, damit daraus nicht Krieg und Bedrohung, sondern Friede und Wohlwollen und Zusammenwirken zum Zweck gemeinsamer Erhaltung und Steigerung des Lebens hervorgeht.

Endlich leistet die Erkenntnis noch eins: sie gibt **Seelenruhe**; sie führt zur Ueberzeugung, daß alles, was geschieht, durch ewige Notwendigkeit aus der Natur der Dinge folgt. Die Frucht dieser Ueberzeugung ist die Seelenruhe. Gegen das, dessen Notwendigkeit man einsieht, hört man auf, sich zu sträuben; unerträglich ist, was wider Schicksal und Recht zu kommen scheint; wie würden die Menschen gegen den Tod sich auflehnen, wenn nicht alle, sondern nur wenige sterben müßten. Vor allem macht die Erkenntnis duldsam gegen die Menschen; sie sind nun einmal so, wankelmütig, undankbar, eitel, rachsüchtig, ein gebrechliches Geschlecht; der Philosoph erkennt ihr Verhalten als Folge ihrer Natur, der Schwachheit der Vernunft und der Stärke der Affekte; und alles verstehen heißt alles vergeben. So ist also wahre Erkenntnis das Mittel der Erhaltung und Förderung des Lebens.

Sie ist zugleich, so führt das fünfte Buch am Schluß aus, sein **höchster und wertvollster Inhalt.** Erkennen ist, im Gegenteil zum Affekt, Selbsttätigkeit; seiner Kraft und Selbständigkeit inne werden, erfüllt mit Freude; Erkenntnis des Höchsten in der höchsten Form, Erkenntnis Gottes oder der Natur, als des Inbegriffs der Realität oder Vollkommenheit, erfüllt mit der höchsten Freude. Aus der Freude entspringt die Liebe zu Gott, der in der Erkenntnis das Gemüt mit Seligkeit erfüllt. So schließt mit religiöser Wendung die Ethik Spinozas.

Die Vereinigung von Erkenntnis, Gottesliebe und Seligkeit, der Anfang und das Ende aller seiner Betrachtungen hat offenbar in Spinozas persönlicher Lebenserfahrung ihren Grund. „Sich ausschließend und ausgeschlossen aus der Glaubensgemeinschaft, in der er geboren,

sich ausschließend und ausgeschlossen aus dem praktischen Leben und aus der öffentlichen Tätigkeit, sich ausschließend und ausgeschlossen aus dem Wettbewerb um Ansehen und literarische Ehre, hatte er sich ganz auf das Leben in seinen Gedanken zurückgezogen; er hatte darin Ruhe, Frieden und Glück gefunden. Diese Erfahrung ist der Boden, aus dem sein Ethik hervorgewachsen ist." Am Anfang seines „Tractatus de intellectus emendatione" spricht er selber es aus: „Nachdem die Erfahrung mich belehrt, daß alle Dinge, die im gemeinen Leben angetroffen werden, eitel und nichtig sind, so faßte ich endlich, da ich sah, daß alles, wovor ich Furcht empfand, weder ein Gut noch ein Uebel enthielt, außer sofern das Gemüt von ihm bewegt würde, den Entschluß nachzuforschen, ob es etwas gäbe, das ein wahres und erwerbbares Gut sei, und das ganz allein das Gemüt zu befriedigen vermöchte, ja dessen Erlangung und Besitz mit der höchsten Freude in Ewigkeit erfüllte. Ich sage, endlich faßte ich den Entschluß. Denn es schien unbedacht, um eines Ungewissen willen, das Gewisse fahren zu lassen; ich sah wohl die Vorteile, welche Ansehen und Reichtum gewähren, und daß ich von ihnen lassen müsse, wenn ich ernstlich auf ein Neues ausginge. Ich erwog also in meinem Gemüt, ob es nicht angehe, ohne den gemeinen Gang meines Lebens zu ändern, meinen Vorsatz zu erreichen oder doch zur Gewißheit darüber zu kommen. Ich habe es wiederholt vergeblich versucht. Denn was im gemeinen Leben des Menschen für das höchste Gut gilt, das kommt, wie ihre Werke zeigen, auf drei Dinge hinaus: Reichtum, Ansehen, Wollust; durch diese drei Dinge wird aber der Geist so abgezogen, daß er an kein anderes Gut zu denken imstand ist." Also die Nachforschung nach dem höchsten Gut ließ mit dem Streben nach diesen Dingen sich nicht vereinigen. „Da ich aber der Sache weiter nachging, fand ich zuerst, daß jene Dinge nicht, wie ich anfangs gemeint, gewisse, sondern vielmehr sehr ungewisse Güter seien, ja, ich sah endlich, daß sie eher für gewisse Uebel angesehen werden müßten, denn sie sind nicht nur nicht Mittel zu unsrer Selbsterhaltung, sondern vielmehr Hindernisse und häufig Ursache des Untergangs derer, die sie besitzen, und immer derer, die von ihnen besessen werden. Die Ursache ist, daß unser Glück und Unglück abhängt von der Natur des Gegenstandes, an den wir uns mit unsrer Liebe hängen. Denn das, was nicht geliebt wird, erregt nicht Streit, noch Traurigkeit, wenn es verloren geht, noch Neid, wenn es von einem andern besessen wird, noch Furcht, noch Haß, noch irgend welche Gemütsbewegungen. Alle diese Affekte aber treffen den, der sich mit seiner Liebe an Dinge hängt, die verloren gehen können. Dahingegen erfüllt die Liebe zu einem Gegenstand, der ewig und unendlich ist, die Seele allein mit Freude und ist alles Schmerzes ledig; was gar ersehnlich ist und mit allen Kräften zu erstreben."

Bis hierher spricht Spinoza verstandesmäßig kühl und nüchtern. Aber in den letzten Sätzen seines Werkes bricht die Wärme seines religiösen Sinnes durch. Sein eignes wahres Wesen, lehrt er, liebt jeder und in der rechten Gotteserkenntnis erfaßt der Mensch dieses Wesen als eine Einheit mit Gott. Hier berührt sich Spinoza am innigsten mit der Mystik. Aber was der Mystiker durch religiöse Uebungen oder durch Abscheidung von der Welt und der Versenkung in sein eignes Inneres zu erreichen sucht, die Vereinigung mit der Gottheit, das erstrebt Spinoza auf dem Weg verständiger Erkenntnis. Auf der höchsten Stufe führt diese Erkenntnis dazu, in allem, was geschieht, die eine große notwendige göttliche Ordnung zu erblicken und zu lieben. Diese Liebe verzichtet auf die Möglichkeit der Gegenliebe. Wer Gott wahrhaft erkannt hat, weiß ja, daß Gott kein einzelnes Wesen neben andern Wesen, sondern die einheitliche Ordnung der Welt ist. Die Gottheit würde erniedrigt werden, wenn sie irgendeinen Teil der Welt, als welcher ein besondrer Teil ja nur durch Verneinung ist, mit besondrer Liebe umfaßte. Der echte Liebende will doch aber das Geliebte nicht herabziehen. **„Wer Gott wahrhaft liebt, wünscht nicht, das Gott ihn wieder liebe."** Die echte Gottesliebe ist also im höchsten Maß uneigennützig.

Als Goethe mitten in den leidenschaftlichen Stürmen seiner Jugend auf diesen Satz Spinozas stieß, fand er darin eine große Beruhigung. Goethe war nicht, wie leider oft behauptet wird, im eigentlichen Sinn Anhänger Spinozas, Pantheist, aber der Gedanke einer göttlichen Einheit der Welt und das uneigennützige Gefühl der Liebe zu dieser Gottnatur gab ihm eine große innere Befreiung. Mit diesen Sätzen, in welchen sich die Persönlichkeit des Philosophen Spinoza so rein offenbart, sei diese Arbeit geschlossen. Es liegt eine tiefe innere Wahrheit in dieser uneigennützigen Gottesliebe, auch wenn es Spinoza nicht gelungen ist, sie ohne Widerspruch mit den Voraussetzungen seiner Philosophie zu verbinden.

# EDITORIALS

## THE CENTENARY OF THE OXFORD MOVEMENT

In the month of July, this year, the Anglican Church is going to celebrate the centennial of the Oxford Movement, for it is then a hundred years that a sermon preached by John Keble may be said to have marked the beginning of the *Oxford revival* of the *Anglo-Catholic theology,* of which Newman and Pusey were the principal authors. In the publication of "Tracts for the Times" they set forth their doctrines and aims in a way to attract in England universal attention. "Puseyism" was a protest against the growing liberalism and the spread of latitudinarian opinions. It was a revival of the Anglo-Catholic system, which involved "not only an emphatic assertion of apostolic succession, but also high ideas of sacramental grace in general, and a view of the "Real Presence," which was denied to be transsubstantiation, although Pusey said later it was probably only a dispute about words. He vindicated tradition as a source of doctrine and held to the authoritative character of doctrinal decisions made by the ecumenic councils.

The celebration of the centenary of this movement is by no means only of an antiquarian interest. There is in the Church of England and the Episcopal Church of the United States a body growing in powers and numbers who look to the men of the Oxford Movement as their spiritual fathers. What these began they want to carry on and complete. As they put it, they consider it their mission to "recover the *whole Catholic heritage*" for their church. The matter of vestments, the cross, statues of the saints, etc., is to them of vital importance. The sacraments, especially that of the holy communion (they call it "mass"), are invested with a magical power. When one attends the service in an Anglo-Catholic church he will find no difference between that and a Roman Catholic one. The ultimate basis of all their claims is their belief in the apostolic succession of their bishops. The power originally possessed by the apostles is passed on to the bishops of the next period, and so on until by unbroken succession it reaches the present time. Only priests ordained by such bishops are real yriests of Christ; only sacraments administered by them are valid. Doctrinally, there seems to be no cleavage between Anglo- and Roman Catholicism. If the pope was to give up infallibility and allow

the priests to marry, the Anglo-Catholics would be glad to return to the bosom of the mother-church.

It can easily be seen that Protestantism has little chance with the Anglo-Catholics. Luther is to them a rebel; he broke up the unity of Christ's body. The official name of their church, the *Protestant* Episcopal Church of the United States, is to them a misnomer. They have no desire for their church to identify itself with the pan-Protestant movement. Their heart is altogether on the Catholic side. Strong and more or less successful efforts have been made for some time to effect a union with the Eastern Orthodox Churches. They would only too gladly join hands with the Roman Church, but their advances in this direction have always been repulsed.

Now it is very true that the Anglo-Catholics are only a minority in the Episcopal Church (The "Chronicle," an organ of the liberal side, claims that the Anglo-Catholics can only count on one tenth of the lay-membership of the church). But their support from the clergy is very strong and they are full of confidence and aggressiveness; the moderates in the church do not want to offend and much less, to lose them. Besides, in some respects, they have the tradition of the whole church back of them. Take that important matter of ordination. If an Eastern Orthodox priest or a Roman Catholic were to join the Episcopal Church their ordination would be accepted. In the case of a Protestant minister it would be different. Here in Cleveland when the dean of the Cathedral left they elected Dr. Emerson to fill the vacancy. He was a man of fifty, had for many years been an outstanding minister in the Congregational Church. But he was treated as a layman. He had to apply for orders anew and it will take him a year until he can be in reality what he now is only in name and by sufferance.

We won't say anything against Dr. Emerson, but there will be few Protestant ministers who are willing to accept an Episcopal appointment at such a price.

The Episcopal Church has always claimed to be the logical agency for an approach to greater unity of the church of Christ. It honors historical continuity and thinks much of the liturgical and sacramental elements, even as the Roman Church does. At the same time, in its thirty-nine articles it takes a Protestant position. So it was the Episcopal Church that issued the invitation to the faith and order conference at Lausanne. But we know that there was little achieved at that place and that a main stumbling block was the claim of apostolic succession and its implications. That will be so in the future and the stronger the Anglo-Catholics will become the less will the Episcopal Church be able to function in its role of guide to unity.

# A TRIP THROUGH THE UNIVERSE

Some time ago we had an interesting meeting in connection with our Religious Community Hour (here in Cleveland). The depression has hit that institution also. While we were formerly able to command the services of leading men from distant places, this year we had to be satisfied mostly with "local talent". Rabbis made their appearance frequently on the platform and were by many considered superior to their "Gentile" brethren. We are not anti-Semitic but we prefer able Christian men to the rabbis of Israel because, besides their ability, they are grounded (or ought to be) in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

But this meeting was of an entirely different kind. It was to be addressed not by a minister, priest or rabbi, but by a scientist. His name was Dietz. He has written acceptable books on physical science, astronomy in particular, and has charge of the scientific page in a local paper of large circulation. The people seem to be hungry for that kind of mental food; the place was filled with a large expectant crowd of eager men and women.

The lecturer's remarks were illustrated by pictures thrown on a screen. He began by telling us about the telescope, describing the one at Mount Wilson Observatory which has a lense of one hundred inches and a focal length of over forty-two feet. This will soon be surpassed by a new two hundred inch reflecting telescope with a tube sixty feet long and over twenty feet in diameter. The speaker naturally brought out the vastness of the universe. We knew something of this before. We knew that the distance of the stars is measured by light years, a light year meaning the distance light, traveling at a speed of ninety million miles per minute, covers in one year. We had heard years ago that there are stars so far from us that the light reaching us from there now, had left the star before Christopher Columbus discovered America, so that if the star had been extinguished then, we should still see its light. But figure our astonishment when we were now told that with the Mount Wilson telescope nebulae have been identified that are estimated to be three hundred million light years away!

The sizes also of some of the heavenly bodies are beyond all power of imagination. The star Betelgeuse e.g. has been found to have a diameter of not less than two hundred million miles. The sunspots that, when thrown on the screen, seem to be as large as ordinary cups or saucers are said to have a diameter of more than eighty thousand miles; the earth could be slipped into one of them and would disappear completely.

The audience was spell-bound during the lecture. Many questions followed, mostly from people who were far from being scien-

tific. One that interested this writer more than any other was, "Where does the sun get its fuel supply?" There is the sun, a furnace larger and hotter than human imagination can conceive, its waves of fire shooting up many, many thousands of miles. This has been going on for millions of years perhaps: where does the supply come from to feed this voracious mouth? The physicist could not explain it satisfactorily.

The chairman of the meeting suggested that a fitting expression of our feeling after hearing such wonderful things about the universe, could be found in David's rapturous words (Ps. 19): "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork." True we thought, but yet there remained a great and puzzling question. We had seen so many and such gigantic heavenly bodies; were told that there were ever so many stellar systems similar to our own. There was evidently an exhaustless creative power behind it all, but *what was the purpose* of putting all these mighty things in existence? They say that in none of these bodies a human being can live; they have no atmosphere like the one enveloping our earth. Only Mars seems to be an exception, although we don't know anything for certain about it. If the earth is the only place peopled by human beings, what is the sense of sending millions of such bodies racing through space? Whatever may be on them, there is no human mind to know them, study them, admire their beauties, or live on their bounty. It couldn't be that all these millions of stars were created for the people on this earth only, so that astronomers might use their skill and that the ordinary mortals might be instructed by them.

Besides, if we accept the teachings of the evolutionists, the universe existed millions of years before man was able to take notice of it and will exist perhaps countless years when man is gone, who then will have any knowledge of it or get any benefit out of it?

Of course this may not be a man-centered universe. They tell us man's earth is but a tiny speck in endless space. But certainly there must be a reason for everything and a purpose towards which everything tends. The same law, they tell us, we are subject to obtains in every part of the universe. Where there is law and order, we conclude there must be intelligence and yet we cannot tell what the intelligent author of it all meant and purposed with his creations.

This writer is inclined to think there must be an answer, but what it is he cannot say.

# „Wir reden was wir wissen und zeugen was wir gesehen haben."

Unter den vielen Unzulänglichkeiten des „Laymen's Foreign Missions Report" war auch die Geringschätzung der christlichen Predigt. Erstens seien, so hieß es, viele Predigten gar schwache intellektuelle Leistungen, und zweitens bedürfe der Orientale mehr Anweisung, sein äußeres und geselliges Leben zu haben, als theologische Belehrung. Frau Pearl Buck, welche in der Verteidigung des „Laymen's Report" eine hervorragende Stellung eingenommen hat, betonte besonders stark, daß sie des vielen Predigens herzlich überdrüssig geworden sei. Auch sei die „Theologie" der meisten Missionare recht rückständig. Man bedürfe heute keiner magischen oder übernatürlichen Erklärung der Person Jesu mehr. Ob Jesus wirklich gelebt, oder ob er nur der Inbegriff der menschlichen Ideale sei, sei ihr persönlich gleichgültig. Es ist unter diesen Umständen nicht zu verwundern, daß uns die Blätter kürzlich berichten, daß sie ihrer Missionsbehörde ihre Resignation eingereicht hat. Es ist nicht angenehm, eine anderwärts tüchtige Kraft zu verlieren, aber es ist auch nicht tunlich, einen sittlichen Idealismus an die Stelle des christlichen Glaubens zu setzen.

Daß in Christo das Heil zu finden ist für den Einzelnen und für die Menschheit, das ist die Botschaft, die er seinen Jüngern gab. Das ist der Quell für die christliche Predigt. Und dieser Quell ist durch die Jahrhunderte hindurch nicht versiegt. Es hat viele Prediger gegeben, die mit ihren Predigten ihre Herde enttäuscht haben. Aber wo die persönliche Ueberzeugung vorhanden war, daß in Christo das Leben sei, wo der Prediger selbst redete, von dem was er erfahren, da war seine Predigt nie völlig vergeblich. Der Prediger soll Zeuge sein, von dem was er weiß, was er durch Wirkung des Geistes weiß.

Es liegt auf der Hand, daß diese geistliche Erfahrung nicht eine sich gleichbleibende Größe ist, noch daß sie sich auf alle Seiten des christlichen Lebens erstreckt. Sie ist wie alles Lebendige dem Gesetz des Wachstums unterworfen. Ich erinnere mich einer Unterredung, die ich als Hilfsprediger mit einem älteren Geistlichen hatte. Ich klagte ihm, daß ich von vielen geistlichen Dingen sagen müsse, daß sie mir noch nicht Sache der Erfahrung geworden, daß ich in Bezug auf sie nur „referieren" könne. „Ach," sagte der weise Alte, „ich bin so viel älter als Sie, und doch gibt es heute noch viele Dinge, von denen auch ich nur referieren kann. Zeugen Sie von dem, was Sie aus Erfahrung wissen; von dem andern referieren Sie, und mit der Zeit rücken Sie in alles hinein, was Ihnen bis jetzt bloß als äußeres Glaubensgut vorliegt." Dieser Rat schien mir so gut

und hilfreich, daß der Eindruck davon mir noch heute so lebendig ist, als wäre es gestern gewesen.

Natürlich mit dieser einen Wahrheit ist noch lange nicht alles gegeben. Alle Woche kommt an uns die Frage: W a s soll ich am nächsten Sonntag predigen? Soll ich nehmen, wozu der Geist, d. i. in diesem Fall die Erlebnisse, äußere und innere, mich treibt, oder soll ich mich an etwas Feststehendes (etwa die Perikopen) halten? Und soll ich mich in meiner Methode von dem Thema leiten lassen, oder auf Textauslegung den Ton legen (im Englischen würde man sagen: Shall I preach topical or expository sermons?). Es ist hier nicht der Ort darauf im Einzelnen näher einzugehen. Schreiber dieses hat früher immer stark betont, daß man den Text ausschöpfen solle, also Bibelauslegung zu ihrem Recht kommen lassen. Hier zu Lande ist das selten geschehen. Das Perikopensystem wurde hier nur von den lutherischen Kirchen beobachtet. Die Predigten wurden demnach meist „topical," durch den Gegenstand bestimmt. Früher waren sie vielfach lehrhaft (doctrinal); jetzt aber haben sie diesen Charakter fast ganz verloren. Anstatt dessen betonen sie die ethischen oder sozialen Auswirkungen des christlichen Glaubens. Aber in all diesem wurde und wird das Bibelwort selten stark berücksichtigt. Die Predigten sind fast nie homiletisch, immer praktisch.

Da dies nun landläufige Praxis ist, so würde man bei der Gemeinde mit einer stark homiletischen Predigt (wie etwa Max Frommel's Epistelpredigten) wenig Anklang finden. Wie sehr auch Bibelstudium notwendig und zu empfehlen ist, der Gemeinde kann man nur die Resultate bringen, nicht das Einzelne. Wenn man auf der Kanzel steht, so muß man sich sagen: Ich bin nicht in Rom, nicht in Korinth oder Ephesus, sondern in Amerika, in Buffalo, Cleveland oder St. Louis. Dies ist das Jahr 1933, nicht das erste Jahrhundert der christlichen Zeitrechnung, oder das sechzehnte. Die Predigt muß eine „Zeitpredigt" sein im besten und vollsten Sinn des Wortes. Sie muß nicht nach der Art der Unitarier und Reformrabbiner eine sonntägliche Besprechung der Dinge sein, die in der Woche in Washington sich begeben haben, aber sie muß den Eindruck geben, daß der Pastor von alle dem bewegt wird, was andre bewegt, aber daß er außerdem einen Grund gefunden hat und andern aufzeigen kann, wo die Seele ruht in der Zeiten Flucht.

Wenn die Gemeinde merkt, unser Pastor redet von dem, was ein Gegenstand innerer Erfahrung für ihn geworden ist, von dem, wovon viele Generationen vor ihm lebendig gezeugt haben, so werden sie ihm ein aufmerksames Ohr darbringen. Wenn sie ferner merken, er gibt ihnen, was er vorher sorgsam durchdacht und mit Bildern populär beleuchtet hat, so werden sie das Gefühl haben, daß er ihnen Brot reicht für den inneren Menschen. Sie werden

ſagen, wenn wir zur Kirche gehen, ſo nehmen wir etwas davon mit. Es iſt ja wahr, daß oft ein Paſtor populär wird, weil er ein liebenswürdiger Kamerad iſt. Aber wenn er uns enttäuſcht, wenn wir unter ſeiner Kanzel ſitzen, was hilft es uns dann, wenn er anderwärts „a nice fellow" iſt?!

## OUT OF THE EDITOR'S MAILBAG

October last year the Editor received a communication from the Executive Committee of the Publication Board which troubled him greatly. He was advised that said Committee, at its last meeting (Rev. Poth presiding; other members present: Mr. Samel, Mr. Niehaus, Mr. Goetsch lay members), and the Manager, had resolved "to bring a motion before the next meeting of the General Board of Publication to recommend to the General Conference that the Theological Magazine be discontinued." The reason for this motion was the need of retrenchment. The Editor naturally considered this motion a very unfortunate one. He applied to a number of oustanding men in the Synod for an expression of opinion. Their reactions are given below. We trust that their position on the matter wil be duly considered.

St. Louis, Mo., November 9, 1932.

Rev. H. Kamphausen, D.D.,
1956 W. Boulevard,
Cleveland, Ohio.

Dear Brother Kamphausen:

I think that you need not entertain a great deal of fear just yet with regard to the discontinuance of the Magazine. The Executive Committee resolution calls only for a placing of the proposition before the next meeting of the Board of Publication, which takes place some time next summer, giving you plenty of time to prepare for a struggle against any action which you might deplore. I hope and trust that the General Conference will not act in this matter until it has expressed itself for or against union with the Reformed Church. If the latter comes to pass, then, as you state, there is no reason why our stronger clerical membership should not warrant the continued publication of a theological magazine.

With kind personal regards,

Sincerely yours,

*C. W. Locher*, President General.

Office of the 1st Vice-president
2135 N. Sawyer Ave.
Chicago, Illinois
February 23, 1933

Rev. H. Kamphausen, D.D.,
1956 West Boulevard,
Cleveland, Ohio.

Dear Brother Kamphausen:

Your information regarding the Theological Magazine was the first indication I had that it was planned to discontinue its publication. I am, of course, not familiar with the business end of this publication, nor do I know off-hand what its circulation is. I presume that the Board of Publications was governed entirely by financial consideration. Your argument that in view of the contemplated merger with the Reformed Church, we should hesitate at this time to discontinue the magazine, seems convincing. I should be glad to use whatever influence I have in postponing the action of the Board.

Very cordially,

*L. N. Goebel.*

Downers Grove, Ill.
November 11, 1932.

Rev. H. Kamphausen, D.Th.,
Cleveland, Ohio.

Dear Brother:

I was as much surprised as you when the news of that rather strange resolution by Eden Publishing Executive Committee broke upon this quiet corner of the universe where I hold forth, usually blissfully ignorant of what is being planned or may be happening in the synodical woods.

. . . At any rate, dear brother, it is only a motion to be made and acted upon at the next plenary session and no more. Personally, under present circumstances, I should not favor this step. Strictly commercially speaking, the Magazine is no paying venture, as we all know. But there are other intangible values to be taken into consideration, especially at this time of impending union with the Reformed Church, as you point out quite pertinently.

Whether a General Conference would entertain such an overture, even if the whole Publishing Board should concur, is at least doubtful and by no means a foregone conclusion. So I should suggest to you, dear brother, not to worry prematurely or lose sleep over that news letter, but in this instance also to follow the advice of Matthew 6: 34. Personal considerations are likely to carry the least weight, as you well know, especially in the hectic times we are in. But the objective argument of the 60th anniversary of the magazine and of the advisability to wait at least until the consummated merger with the Reformed Church has had time to demonstrate its bearing upon the periodical—that argument is in itself sufficiently convincing.

So be of good cheer and keep on "sawing wood". You are doing it quite successfully, it seems to me, in the pages of the Magazine. That our Evangelical "clergy" are not sufficiently theologically-minded to patronize their own publication we can not help. It is just too bad.

With best wishes fraternally yours,
*G. A. Neumann*, Member of Board.

March 2, 1933, Elmhurst, Illinois.

Rev. H. Kamphausen, D.D.,
1956 W. Boulevard,
Cleveland, Ohio.

Dear Brother:

Your letter came as a distinct surprise. It never occurred to me that anyone would suggest such a backward step as the discontinuance of the Theological Magazine. If anything, we ought to put more of an investment into it and improve it along all lines.

You can rest assured that I will do everything within my power to prevent such an action. In view of the anticipated merger it is particularly significant that our brethren in the Reformed Church have no such magazine. Therefore we could make an additional contribution.

I appreciate your kind remarks and your evident desire to enlist all who can be of help, in maintaining and supplementing rather than decreasing the program of our Church.

With all good wishes from house to house, I remain

Faithfully yours,
*T. Lehmann*, President.

St. Louis, April 11, 1933.

Rev. H. Kamphausen, D.D.,
1956 West Boulevard,
Cleveland, Ohio.

Dear Brother:

The intimation that the publication of the "Theological Magazine" may, perhaps, in the near future be discontinued, came to me as a distinct shock. I consider it the finest publication of its kind and usually read it from cover to cover. I have found very few articles in it which were not instructive or helpful in some other way.

The greatest enjoyment I usually find in the perusal of your editorial articles and I generally read them first. Your book-reviews are also splendid. All that you write is so sane and truly Evangelical that I always look forward to the next number of the "Magazine" with happy anticipations.

The discontinuation of the publication of the "Theological Magazine" would, in my opinion, be a lamentable backward step in the history of our beloved Synod. I, for one, would rather discontinue my subscription to several other papers and periodicals than give up the "Theological Magazine."

You may rest assured that I shall do everything that lies within my power that the mentioned backward step will not be taken, and I shall speak a good word for the "Magazine" whenever the opportunity presents itself, even as I have done this in the past.

Hoping that the "Magazine" will continue to live and that you will remain its editor for many years more, I remain with fraternal greeting.

Yours,
*F. H. Krafft*, Bethany Ev. Church, St. Louis.

St. Louis, November 22, 1932.

Rev. H. Kamphausen, D.D.,
1956 W. Boulevard,
Cleveland, Ohio.

Dear Brother Kamphausen:

Received your letter regarding the Theological Magazine and its future status.

Naturally I am very much interested and would welcome an opportunity to talk the whole matter through with you. As I hope to be in Cleveland sometime in December for a short visit, I will look you up and talk the matter over, as I have had several proposals in mind regarding the Theological Magazine, which may spread a different light upon the whole matter.

In the meantime, be assured that my efforts will be directed to a revival rather than a discontinuance of the magazine.

With best wishes to you and your family,

Fraternally yours,
*H. P. Vieth*, Executive Secretary.

1008 E. 3 St., Cincinnati, O., February 10, 1933.

Rev. H. Kamphausen, D.D.,
Cleveland, Ohio.

Dear Brother Kamphausen:

I agree with you that it would be unfair to discontinue the Theological Magazine at this time. Will do what I can to prevent it;—write to Brother Hafele today.

Fraternally yours,
*Conrad Held.*

November 14, 1932.

My dear Dr. Kamphausen:

Many a time I have longed to see you face to face. You were in the class of 1901, and your class was one of the best I have ever had a share in giving instruction to. I think your Magazine is a model journal and well edited.

You have made a record for yourself. May you long continue in the harness and be worthy of great praise.

Ever most cordially your old friend.

*George L. Robinson,*
Old Testament Professor at McCormick Seminary.

*Dr. A. S. Zerbe*, formerly professor at the Dayton, O., Central Theological Seminary of the Reformed Church, writes (in the "Christian World") of the Theological Magazine and especially its September issue of last year (containing the Editor's article on the "Heidelberg Catechism") as follows:

*The Theological Magazine* of the Evangelical Synod, whose editor is Rev. H. Kamphausen, D.D. (Giessen Univ.), has as its leading article in the September issue, an editorial on "The Heidelberg Catechism." I write to direct attention to a few points.

1. The paper is well thought out, clear-cut, analytical, comprehensive and irenical.

2. In view of the contemplated union of the two denominations, it is unusually timely, showing what one of their competent scholars thinks of our catechism.

3. Having been a subscriber to The Theological Magazine for a series of years, I have come to prize it very highly for its doctrinal soundness (as I view the matter), discriminating book-reviews in doctrinal as well as practical fields and general literature; I can heartily recommend it to our ministers, especially since we have now no theological review of our own. It is a bi-monthly, averaging 80 pages per number. About one-third of the space, or less, contains German articles, often by European Doctors of Philosophy or Theology. It is published by the Eden Publishing House, 1712 Chouteau Ave., St. Louis, Mo. It is uncommonly helpful to pastors in the field. Price, $2.00.

*A. S. Zerbe.*

*Dr. Carl F. Heyl*, Editor of the "Kinderzeitung" of the Reformed Church, writes that the Reformed Church ought to have a theological organ, that he will gladly give his services in enlisting the interest of his Reformed brethren and that he has already been giving the "Theological Magazine" cordial support before his public. He expresses the hope that our Synod may *not take adverse action before the union* between the two church bodies *has been effected.*

"Wir finden," he says, "in dieser theologischen Zeitschrift deutsche Gründlichkeit und amerikanischen praktischen Geist sehr glücklich kombiniert. Der Schriftleiter desselben hat seinen theologischen Doktor von der Universität Giessen erhalten, hat aber ein Leben im praktischen amerikanischen Pfarrdienst zugebracht und redet darum nicht nur mit wissenschaflicher Autorität, sondern auch mit praktischer Einsicht in die Bedürfnisse des amerikanischen Pfarrers über die theologischen und pfarramtlichen Probleme unsers Landes. Natürlich kommen in den Abhandlungen verschiedene Standpunkte zum Ausdruck, wie es sich in einer theologischen Zeitschrift gebührt: jedoch vertritt das Magazin im allgemeinen eine konservative Haltung.

Wir empfehlen es auf das herzlichste."

*C. F. H.*

# The Christian World

## Hitler and the German Churches

By Samuel McCrea Cavert

When Maude Royden returned to her native England after a trip to America, she remarked that a visit to a foreign people ought to be regarded as something like a sacrament—an opportunity for discovering beneath the superficial appearance an inner and invisible spiritual grace. To do that now with reference to Germany, I found far from easy when I was there at the end of April. The ruthless suppression of freedom, the cruel discriminations against the Jews, the swaggering insolence of brown-shirted students toward those who dissent from the nazi program, tempt one to the hasty generalization that nothing of any spiritual promise is to be found in Adolf Hitler's Germany.

There is even a danger, which many recent writers on conditions in Germany have not escaped, of doing grave injustice to the leaders in the German churches today. The impression seems to be abroad that German Protestantism has shown itself so spineless as to have capitulated completely to the nazi government. This is a serious error. The contrary is nearer to the truth. The fact is that, in a revolution which has brought all other institutions under the direct dominance of an all-absorptive state, the church is the one institution that has maintained a substantial measure of independence. What has taken place in the life of the church may even prove to be momentous, a crucial event which Christian historians will write about for generations to come. Here at least is one point in Germany where an observer who penetrates beneath the surface of things, in the spirit of Miss Royden's dictum, may discern a spiritual grace.

### The Churches Show Courage

There was abundant reason to fear that in the face of the demands of the nazi government to exercise an unqualified control over the whole life of the people, the churches would be coerced into servile submission. The highhanded suppression of the trades unions and the drastic measures by which the universities have been altogether subjected to the purposes of the state were omens of what might be in store for the church unless its leaders met the issue with courage and wisdom. Thus far they have done so. They have at least safeguarded the independence of the church to the extent of preventing it from becoming a mere appendage of the government—and for the insight and resoluteness which led them to make their successful stand against the threatened encroachment by the state, Christians throughout the world should be thankful.

On April 22 the German newspapers announced that in the state of Mecklenburg-Schwerin the civil authority had appointed a "commissioner of religion" who was to supersede the bishop and the church council and have full powers to administer the affairs of the church, including even the removal of pastors. There was a widespread misgiving among the churches that this might be simply a prelude to similar action affecting the country as a whole. The church officials of Mecklenburg made immediate protest. The Lutheran church of Bavaria declared that the appointment of a state commissioner for the church in Bavaria would meet with its unyielding opposition. The president of the Deutschen Evangelischen Kirchenbund (the National federation of churches) directed attention to the address of Chancellor Hitler on March 23 in which he had given assurance that the independence of the church would be respected and held personal conference with him on the subject. Within less than a week the appointment was revoked. The only official act which the commissioner had performed had been to make a statement declaring that he was in supreme authority in Mecklenburg!

### A Crisis Passed

On the same day when the appointment of the Mecklenburg commissioner was revoked, Chancellor Hitler announced that he had designated Dr. Müller, a Lutheran of Königsberg, to serve as his personal *liaison* in considering problems affecting the Protestant churches. What this portends for the future is still uncertain, but it is significant that the appointee, while of course a strong nazi, does not represent the extreme group who would like to bring the church under the dictation of the state. For the present at least, it appears that a crisis of the first magnitude has been passed. That the gravity of the issue was immediately perceived by the Christian leaders and that it was dealt with vigorously is an impressive witness to the vitality of German Protestantism—all the more striking when one realizes how long a tradition of intimate association with the state the German churches had had before the war.

But even though the church as an organization preserves its independence of the state, will it in its own life exercise any freedom worthy of the name? It is entirely possible for a church to be technically free, in the sense of not being subject to external coercion, and yet in its own spirit be in bondage to its environment, impotent to say or do anything which has any creative effect on the social life. Will German Protestantism have the ethical vigor and the spiritual insight to set forth truly Christian standards and ideals, derived from its own gospel, or will it merely reflect the point of view of the nazi state within which it has its being? While the crisis in the formal relation of the church to the state has probably been passed, the crisis in the church itself remains acute.

### The Position of Dr. Dibelius

Signs are not lacking, however, that German Protestantism will be equal to its day of opportunity. For example, the general superin-

tendent of Prussia, Dr. Dibelius, in his sermon at the opening of the reichstag expressed the hope that the revolution may soon enter a new phase in which justice and order *for all* may be established. This was, of course, an indirect way of saying that justice for all had not yet been assured. More significantly, in light of the anti-Jewish attitude of the nazis, in speaking of the duty of the church, he declared that "it is not racial supremacy but the kingdom of God which is the true theme of evangelical preaching." In a subsequent address, he insisted that the church, as the servant of God, is not for one party but for all the people. The church federation in a public message stated that the "method of the evangelical church is the preaching of the gospel entrusted to her and the service of love, to which she calls her members and which she offers to all, irrespective of political views." This certainly has significance when one realizes that it is Hitler's avowed policy to make the nazi party and the state synonymous.

### Quiet Efforts in Behalf of Jews

The churches have not, it has to be said regretfully, made any public protest against the injustice done to the Jews. But it must be borne in mind that in a time of revolution (and it cannot be too strongly emphasized that it is actual revolution in the strict sense of the word that is going on in Germany) there are inevitable limits to what any group can do. The psychology is much like that of wartime. If we recall how silent the American churches were during 1917-1918 on the treatment of pacifists or the incompatibility of war with Christianity, we shall be less inclined to pass too sweeping a judgment on our fellow-Christians in Germany today. Moreover, German Christianity has not been wholly indifferent. In the Frankfurter Zeitung, one of the prominent ministers of the city, Pastor Rudolf Wintermann, wrote an article in the Easter holidays protesting against the prevailing anti-Semitism. He appeals to Jesus' attitude toward the Samaritans to show that it is unchristian to make discriminations on purely racial grounds and says, "The New Testament knows nothing of racial conflict—'flesh and blood shall not inherit the kingdom of God.'"

While such public utterances as this are rare, church leaders have in quiet ways used their influence effectively in behalf of the Jews. They are credited by well-informed German liberals with having had a part in securing the limitation of the anti-Jewish boycott to a single day. The government decree that Jewish children must not be molested in the schools is believed to have been directly due to the personal interest of officials of the church federation. On the whole, one who studies the present situation at first hand finds it natural to conclude that the German church leaders have played a much more creditable role than would be guessed from the press reports. While I cannot vouch for the accuracy of the quotation, I was told more than once that a leading German socialist, Professor Paul Tillich, who has been expelled from his university chair at Frankfort because of his criticism of the nazis, has said that the attitude of the churches is one of the bright spots on the German scene.

Moreover, it must not be forgotten that at the present juncture the church authorities have their hands full in trying to preserve the very life of the church as an independent entity. This requires not only the assertion of the rights of the church against governmental interference, but also the rebuilding of the structure of the church itself. At this point German Protestantism is still in the midst of a task of huge proportions.

### The "German Christians"

The crisis at this point centers around the efforts of the new party in German Protestantism known as the "German-Christians." These "German Christians" are ardent members of the nazi party who regard Hitler's regime as meaning a rebirth of Germany, not only politically but morally, culturally and spiritually, and who are therefore determined to have the church throw its full power unreservedly behind the nazi program. They hail Hitler as the instrument of God to save Germany—and, in fact, Europe—from atheistic communism. To describe clearly and concretely what the "German Christians" stand for is not easy. The difficulty inheres in the fact that, despite their common enthusiasm for the nazi revolution, they are by no means united. The more radical group would like to have the church function as the right arm of the government, furnishing a spiritual impulse to complete nazi triumph. Others, however, while joining the "German Christians" because of the conviction that the nazi program is the only way out for Germany, are not desirous of seeing the church enter into a political alliance. Still others identify themselves with the party of the "German Christians" because of its interest in the practical reform of the church, especially in bringing the church into a more vital relation with the people. In other words, the "German Christians" include earnest Christians as well as wild nationalists.

It is commonly believed that the "German Christians" could now command a majority in church elections. They do not, however—at least not in their more extreme views—have the support of the recognized leadership of the churches. In fact, the more radical wing of the "German Christians" cannot point to a single well-known church leader or theologian among their number.

### Coming Church Unions

As an alternative to the establishment of a "Reichskirche," which would be under the dominance of the nazi state, the leaders of the church are now devoting their energies to a voluntary revision of the constitution of the churches so as to substitute a single nation-wide church for the twenty-eight provincial churches (Landeskirchen) which, though joined since 1922 in a strong federation, are separate and autonomous bodies. If the present effort of the church leaders succeeds, as now seems likely, there will probably be a national Lutheran church, a national Reformed church and (unless the "union" of Lutheran and Reformed in Prussia and a few other states should be dissolved) a national Lutheran-Reformed union, these three bodies being federated in an administration so centralized and complete in all

matters except creed and worship that it will be almost a single church. Just how the smaller group of "free churches"—Baptist, Methodist, Moravian—will fit into the total picture has not yet become clear.

The final word of one who has been in contact with German church leaders during recent weeks must be an appeal to avoid rash judgment and to strive instead for an attitude of patient understanding and sympathy. They are carrying a terrific burden—greater than we can easily realize. Some of them are suffering intensely in spirit in trying to harmonize their personal Christian convictions with their responsibility for the church as a whole in the midst of a revolution when wisdom as well as courage is called for. Above all, we should maintain an unbroken fellowship with our German brethren and demonstrate that the new international unity which has been growing among the churches since the Universal Christian conference on life and work at Stockholm in 1925 can withstand the strain of any political crisis.

*Christian Century.*

## Lo! The Poor Liberal

Dwight Bradley

I have been hearing and reading so much criticism lately of liberals and liberalism, that I ought to be developing an inferiority complex. For I am a liberal and I can't help believing in liberalism. Perhaps I have a "mind-set" or a "fixation," or am the unconscious tool of a "conditioned reflex." But anyway, I am a liberal; and my untutored mind persists in telling me that liberalism is not so monstrous an evil as some ardent critics suppose it to be. Even Harry Ward and Reinhold Niebuhr are unable to shake me loose from what to them must seem a pathetic, if not morally incorrigible, allegiance to the mood and method of liberal evolutionary idealism!

Being a liberal, I rather enjoy reading or hearing the attacks that are being made so vigorously upon the liberal position. Thus far at least I have had no inclination to rise up in wrath to denounce and defend. I listen to Harry Ward with a sort of relish, because he is so implacably brilliant and so logically cogent. Niebuhr's book on "Moral Man in Immoral Society" fires me with admiration for so keen a mind that can express itself with so stimulating a pungency. And yet, I hear Ward and read Niebuhr—and am still a liberal! What is the matter with me, I wonder. Am I a hopeless un-realist? Is my mind too stolid to be stung awake by the piercing dialetic of inverted Hegelianism? I don't know, nor does it greatly matter. But, lo! the poor liberal! Must he stand up and receive his sentence without benefit either of counsel or of clergy?

No, he deserves his chance for rebuttal. He is entitled to his day in court. And, because it may possibly be that his case is not so hopeless as the prosecution hopes, and as many of his whilom friends begin to fear, I crave permission to state his case as well as my ability allows.

Now to begin with, a liberal is one who has a certain specific attitude toward life as a whole. It is an *attitude of open-minded, teachable objectivity.* He does not easily accept the finality of any theory, nor readily give himself to any movement that involves violent disagreement with an adversary. For this reason, he incurs inevitably the displeasure of all passionate protagonists and of all last-ditch defenders. They regard him as being lukewarm, a straddler, a slacker, a temporizer, and even a coward. The left-wing radicals denounce him as an ally of the *status quo.* The right-wing conservatives fear him as an abettor of revolution. When conflict reaches a climax, the liberal finds himself the object of contempt on one side and of suspicion on the other. Unless he be made of very stern stuff indeed, he is likely at last to surrender his liberalism and join himself to one party or the other. But if he be sufficiently resolute he will resist the impulse to line up with either side, and will be content to wait for the storm to pass and a more reasonable state of mind to prevail. Then, he is in a position to save from the wreckage of war some few principles and values with which to help rebuild the structure which violence has ruined.

No matter what the cause of any furious struggle, its outcome is certain to be demoralizing. The liberal is the only one who, in such a case, is able to lead in restoration after the tumult and the shouting dies. It is well to remember this. The present plight of mankind is not due to the influence of nineteenth century liberalism. On the contrary, it is due to the fact that doctrinaire nationalists, militarists, capitalists, communists and fascists have been biting at each other with bared teeth, and are even yet unwilling to listen to the counsel of men whose views are founded on inductive principles of reasoning and are tempered by constructive good will. The attempt to put blame on liberalism for the tragically hopeless defeatism and the bitter disillusionment that prevails to-day is like attributing a plague of smallpox to the physicians who do all they can to check it. In certain communities sometimes called "backward" this is actually done. The very men who work night and day to stop an epidemic are accused by the ignorant population of being responsible for its spread! This is no more absurd or unjust than it is to saddle the pre-war liberals with responsibility for the chaos of this time. Predacious capitalists looking for plunder and acrimonious communists plotting a proletarian vengeance, are actually and literally the villains in this modern drama, with super-patriots and militarists serving to them as agents and conspirators. The powerful Red Army of Communist Russia represents militarism quite as adequately as do the military establishments of nations which are still under the control of capitalism. The doctrine of the "class war" is as vindictive as is the doctrine of jingo nationalism. For neither doctrine can the liberal have anything except a feeling of repugnance. He is against all such crusades. He is against all crusaders as such. He has perspective enough to see that the psychology of a crusader is in reality the psychosis of a neurotic. He knows that die-hard conservatism, revolutionary communism and fas-

cistic Caesarism are all the symptoms of emotional derangement, individual and social. Naturally he would like to see a cure. The cure he recommends is the cultivation of an attitude of open-minded, teachable objectivity. No wonder his prospective patients resent him. Such is the normal reaction of psycho-pathological cases to the analyst who tries to do them some good.

Next, the liberal is one who approaches all matters with scientific tentativeness. This, of course, is a great scandal to all zealots who begin their attack always in a spirit of determined finality. The liberal envisages life as process, facts as relative, and conclusions as subject to revision. The process of evolution he regards as being normal; while *creative* revolution to him is the sudden acceleration of evolution as the result either of arbitrary long-time interference with normal process finally overcome, or of exceptionally powerful external stimulation of evolutionary process. He is not against revolution as such. But he is decidedly against revolution that is precipitated for purposes of social revenge. He is opposed to this latter kind of revolution because it is the action of psychopathic forces and runs against the grain of creative growth. Such revolutions as have come about through intelligent and rational discovery, in the fields of science, economics and politics, are joyously greeted by liberals. They fit into the scheme of things seen from the standpoint of rational good will. On the other hand, such revolutions as have begun in wrath and violence the liberal not only deprecates but abhors. The reason is plain. Such revolutions always eventuate in reaction. A protracted period of strife follows in their wake. To hold what gains they make, the revolutionists must resort to punitive repression. The time comes when a revolution against revolution brings the overthrow of the revolutionary dictatorship. Then, all the work must be started over again; and it is the liberal who has to start it!

Finally, the liberal is one whose end view is idealistic. That is, he steers by a star in the sky and keeps his eyes on the star. He knows well enough that in his ship he can never reach the star. But what of that? He is not trying to reach the star. He is trying to steer his ship.

Does this mean that the liberal is not a realist? Scarcely. It means, rather, that his realism takes in the value of stars as points by which to steer a ship at night through difficult and sometimes dangerous waters. He does not depend upon a star alone. He has his navigator's chart and he uses it intelligently. But the star serves as a far-off guide; and besides, he loves the stars. They look good to him. They lift his spirit and satisfy a craving in his soul. They pacify his heart even while they furnish a point to steer by. They are useful in navigation, but, far more than that, they are beautiful and inspiring.

Need, therefore, the liberal apologize for being an idealist? Need he cringe before the charge of his doctrinaire realist critic that he sometimes looks upwards for strength and guidance and illumination? I hardly think so. On the contrary, I am inclined to believe that our

contemporaneously clamant realists would do well to gaze at a star once in a while for themselves and see whether or not the stars are *real!* Or do our realists live under skies that are always covered by clouds? And have they reached the point of disillusionment where, in hopeless despair, they must believe that stars do not exist—that ideals are nothing more than dreams?

Probably not, as a whole. But they seem on the way to the conviction. Wherefore, perhaps, the liberal may be permitted to suggest that the clouds are not stationary, and that they will pass before very long. The stars assuredly are there, and they are worth watching for and waiting for.

But lo! the poor liberal, whose untutored mind naively remembers the stars, and cherishes ideals, and watches the sky! The poor liberal, trying to persuade his disillusioned comrades to remember, and to cherish and to watch with him!

The poor liberal? Nay, but maybe he is not to be pitied, not to be scorned. Does he not discern, even in the night of fear, a point of light that penetrates the darkness? Does he not feel, even as he stands there looking, the touch of a Hand on his shoulder, and hear the sound of a Voice in his ear?

*Christian Leader.*

## A Humanist Manifesto

The time has come for widespread recognition of the radical changes in religious beliefs throughout the modern world. The time is past for mere revision of traditional attitudes. Science and economic change have disrupted the old beliefs. Religions the world over are under the necessity of coming to terms with new conditions created by a vastly increased knowledge and experience. In every field of human activity, the vital movement is now in the direction of a candid and explicit humanism. In order that religious humanism may be better understood we, the undersigned, desire to make certain affirmations which we believe the facts of our contemporary life demonstrate.

There is great danger of a final, and we believe fatal, identification of the word *religion* with doctrines and methods which have lost their significance and which are powerless to solve the problems of human living in the twentieth century. Religions have always been means for realizing the highest values of life. Their end has been accomplished through the interpretation of the total environing situation (theology or world view), the sense of values resulting therefrom (goal or ideal), and the technique (cult), established for realizing the satisfactory life. A change in any of these factors results in alteration of the outward forms of religion. This fact explains the changefulness of religions throughout the centuries. But through all changes religion itself remains constant in its quest for abiding values, an inseparable feature of human life.

To-day man's larger understanding of the universe, his scientific achievement, and his deeper appreciation of brotherhood, have created

a situation which requires a new statement of the means and purposes of religion. Such a vital, fearless, and frank religion capable of furnishing adequate social goals and personal satisfaction may appear to many people as a complete break with the past. While this age does owe a vast debt to the traditional religions, it is none the less obvious that any religion that can hope to be a synthesizing and dynamic force for to-day must be shaped for the needs of this age. To establish such a religion is a major necessity of the present. It is a responsibility which rests upon this generation. We therefore affirm the following:

*First:* Religious humanists regard the universe as self-existing and not created.

*Second:* Humanism believes that man is a part of nature and that he has emerged as the result of a continuous process.

*Third:* Holding an organic view of life, humanists find that the traditional dualism of mind and body must be rejected.

*Fourth:* Humanism recognizes that man's religious culture and civilization, as clearly depicted by anthropology and history, are the product of a gradual development due to his interaction with his natural environment and with his social heritage. The individual born into a particular culture is largely molded by that culture.

*Fifth:* Humanism asserts that the nature of the universe depicted by modern science makes unacceptable any supernatural or cosmic guarantees of human values. Obviously humanism does not deny the possibility of realities as yet undiscovered, but it does insist that the way to determine the existence and value of any and all realities is by means of intelligent inquiry and by the assessment of their relation to human needs. Religion must formulate its hope and plans in the light of the scientific spirit and method.

*Sixth:* We are convinced that the time has passed for theism, deism, modernism, and the several varieties of "new thought."

*Seventh:* Religion consists of those actions, purposes, and experiences which are humanly significant. Nothing human is alien to the religious. It includes labor, art, science, philosophy, love, friendship, recreation—all that is in its degree expressive of intelligently satisfying human living. The distinction between the sacred and the secular can no longer be maintained.

*Eighth:* Religious humanism considers the complete realization of human personality to be the end of man's life, and seeks its development and fulfillment in the here and now. This is the explanation of the humanist's social passion.

*Ninth:* In place of the old attitudes involved in worship and prayer the humanist finds his religious emotions expressed in a heightened sense of personal life and in a co-operative effort to promote social well-being.

*Tenth:* It follows that there will be no uniquely religious emotions and attitudes of the kind hitherto associated with belief in the supernatural.

*Eleventh:* Man will learn to face the crisis of life in terms of his knowledge of their naturalness and probability. Reasonable and manly attitudes will be fostered by education and supported by custom. We assume that humanism will take the path of social and mental hygiene and discourage sentimental and unreal hopes and wishful thinking.

*Twelfth:* Believing that religion must work increasingly for joy in living, religious humanists aim to foster the creative in man and to encourage achievements that add to the satisfactions of life.

*Thirteenth:* Religious humanism maintains that all associations and institutions exist for the fulfillment of human life. The intelligent evaluation, transformation, control, and direction of such associations and institutions with a view to the enhancement of human life is the purpose and program of humanism. Certainly religious institutions, their ritualistic forms, ecclesiastical methods, and communal activities must be reconstituted as rapidly as experience allows, in order to function effectively in the modern world.

*Fourteenth:* The humanists are firmly convinced that existing acquisitive and profit-motivated society has shown itself to be inadequate, and that a radical change in methods, controls, and motives must be instituted. A socialized and co-operative economic order must be established to the end that the equitable distribution of the means of life be possible. The goal of humanism is a free and universal society in which people voluntarily and intelligently co-operate for the common good. Humanists demand a shared life in a shared world.

*Fifteenth and last:* We assert humanism will: (*a*) affirm life rather than deny it; and (*b*) seek to elicit the possibilities of life, not flee from it; and (*c*) endeavor to establish the conditions of a satisfactory life for all, not merely for the few. By this positive *morale* and intention humanism will be guided, and from this perspective and alignment the techniques and efforts of humanism will flow.

So stand the theses of religious humanism. Though we consider the religious forms and ideas of our fathers no longer adequate, the quest for the good life is still the central task for mankind. Man is at last becoming aware that he alone is responsible for the realization of the world of his dreams, that he has within himself the power for its achievement. He must set intelligence and will to the task.

Signed: *J. A. C. F. Auer*, Parkman professor Church History and Theology, Harvard University; professor Church History, Tufts College. *E. Burdette Backus*, Unitarian minister. *Harry Elmer Barnes*, Editorial Department, Scripps-Howard Newspapers. *L. M. Birkhead*, Liberal Center, Kansas City, Mo. *Raymond B. Bragg*, secretary Western Unitarian Conference. *Edwin Arthur Burtt*, professor of Philosophy, Sage School of Philosophy, Cornell University. *Ernest Caldecott*, minister First Unitarian Church, Los Angeles, Cal. *A. J. Carlson*, professor of Physiology, University of Chicago. *John Dewey*, Columbia University. *Albert C. Dieffenbach*, formerly editor *Christian Register*, minister Unitarian church in Newton Center, Mass. *John H. Dietrich*, minister First Unitarian Society of Minneapolis. *Bernard Fantus, M. D.* pro-

fessor of Therapeutics, College of Medicine, University of Illinois. *William Floyd*, editor the *Arbitrator*, New York City. *F. H. Hankins*, professor of Economics and Sociology, Smith College. *A. Eustace Haydon*, professor of History of University of Chicago; and others.

*Christian Leader.*

## The Pope and Art

Like a good advertiser who broadcasts messages of various goods, the Pope, who also has his broadcasting station, feels the urge to get on the air, but unlike the commercial agent, he generally sends out a negative and not a positive message. The attack this time is on modern art and the pronouncement has been declared "the most severe condemnation the Church has ever pronounced on any school of art." The voice of the Vatican condemns the products of Cubism, Futurism and Expressionism as "caricatures," and declares that the doors of the churches should be shut to such "deformations" and should only be open to new work done "in the good and venerable tradition."

To all this reactionary position the Italian critics at once responded and pointed out that the exhibitions of art recently patronized by the Church contained the most miserable offerings because the Vatican had insisted that art should present "good intentions" and not merely manifest good workmanship.

Of course this distinction between the intention and presentation is an old one. As early as the Council of Nicea the Church declared that the artists should have nothing to do with the choice of subjects. This decree was obeyed for many centuries, for even in the time of Lippo Lippi and Fra Angelico both subject and intention were religious. With the growth of the Renaissance this distinction tended to be obscured. In the early period we have instances of subjects which would never have been chosen by the artists, for example, such allegorical subjects as are found in the paintings of Andrea Bonaiuti, in the Spanish Chapel of Santa Maria Novella in Florence. Here the pictures of the Triumph of Thomas Aquinas and of the Church Militant and the Church Triumphant would scarcely have been selected by a painter but only by Dominicans interested in scholasticism.

In the development of the Renaissance we have a decided drift away from good intention, but nevertheless many masterpieces. Even Albrecht Duerer experimented in the cubism of the human figure. But it remained for Michaelangelo to show that he was as much interested in the pagan portrayal as in the Christian legend. When a certain Cardinal objected to his painting too many nudes in his picture of The Last Judgment, and hung around in an irritating way while the great master was at work in the Sistine Chapel, the latter waited until his tormentor had left and then painted his figure in Hell. When the Cardinal complained about this to the Pope, the latter, who was one of the lively Medici family, retorted: "I have control over Purgatory, but not over Hell."—*Chronicle.*

## Empty Gesture

The new Rector of Trinity Churhc, New York, recently held a service at "Old Trinity" in which he followed the example of some other Churches by requesting an offering of jewelry, especially of gold and silver, for the benefit of the unemployment fund, possibly of the Diocese of New York.

In this connection reference to the last Year Book issued (December 31, 1931) is amazing. This parish reports assets in endowments of $18,141,263.93. Some even consider this conservative. It has a net income, less expenses for maintenance, repairs, taxes, insurance, management, etc., of $1,269,461.27. Of this income the parish expends on itself $495,769.83 is supporting eight churches and twenty-one clergy. The parish gives away $122,839.86. This includes subsidies for five parishes, the Russian Church, the City Mission Society and a number of smaller agencies. It places in reserve for the Hudson-King Realty Corporation, $151,689.76. And, in addition reveals a balance over expenses of $499,161.82.

The inference that may be drawn is that over a half million dollars has been added to the swollen endowment of this parish. Its endowment was left originally for the benefit of the "Rector and Inhabitants . . . of New York in connection with the Protestant Church of England." Again, the inference was and is that the property, which has become so valuable, was intended not for the selfish use of one parish but for the whole Church in New York.

In view of the great wealth and the half million dollar surplus why did Trinity make the futile gesture of a collection of gold and silver trinkets for the benefit of the poor?—*Chronicle.*

# Book Review

NOTE—*Reviews, when not signed, are by the Editor.*
*(When ordering books, please mention this Magazine.)*

**Religion that Works.** Sermons of Practical Christian Life by *S. M. Shoemaker, Jr.*, Rector of Calvary Church in New York. Fleming H. Revell Comp. New York-Chicago, 1928. 128 pages.

The prominence of the "Oxford Group" movement (or of the "First Century Christian Fellowship") at this time, explains our reference to the books of Mr. Shoemaker. He is one of the chief supporters of the cause and certainly its most prolific writer. The book we have selected came out several years ago, but it is so fresh, lucid and earnest that it will pay any one to peruse it. In the very first sermon he tells us that Jesus teaches us not only a way of life. Redemption, he says, we need; not maxims. Park Ave. needs it as well as the Bowery, and after conversion we need guidance. The Sermon on the Mount is not sufficient. A Christian has to have special guidance; it is often not easy to find the will of God.

We know how the necessity of a "guided life" is stressed by the movement. Oftentimes the objection is made that in their search for special guidance these people go to extremes. They expect from prayer and its answers the illumination that ordinary people get by the use of their intelligence; they even hear "voices" that tell them to do so and so. There is nothing of this in this book. Mr. Shoemaker tells us that to find the will of God in any particular situation we must pray, think, get the advice of others, do what seems the natural thing and go ahead fearlessly.

The ultimate origin of unbelief is not so much the resistance of the intellect; it is moral; it is psychological rather than intellectual (Krumbine). Mr. Shoemaker doesn't preach much—or at all—on doctrines. The cross, he says, is God's way to make up for the mass of unatoned-for sin. About resurrection he mentions that, according to Professor Acton, it is one of the best authenticated facts of history. Nevertheless he stresses the need of growth in knowledge and recommends books like Hocking's "Human Nature and Its Remaking", R. Otto's "Idea of the Holy", and Dick Sheppard's "Impatience of a Parson".

Conversion and Self-Surrender, are they crisis-experiences, detached in point of time from the situation before and after, or are they gradual developments? We confess that we are not quite sure about Shoemaker's position here. He says, "You may prepare for decision, but when it is made the hammer falls." And later we "must match up the actual with the ideal; this requires a process." We venture to say that perfect self-surrender is an ideal we never reach in this life.

"For me to live is Christ" says Paul. We don't doubt that Paul could so say, but we dare say that he was one of the very few exceptions.

We must learn, says Shoemaker, to live in "the climate" of prayer. Again a beautiful ideal. It seems that the Oxford people—or many of them—have been raised up for the purpose of showing that much of the ideal can be made actual. May it be given them to "share" their faith with the people of the church; at the present time the church people's faith burns but dimly.

**Moral Man and Immoral Society.** A Study in Ethics and Politics by *Reinhold Niebuhr*. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1932. 284 pages, $2.50.

In this book the author cuts the table cloth between himself and the Liberals; he asserts the futility of their whole social program. The fundamental attitude of the Liberals is their faith in social progress. They are optimists expecting the victory of the good life sooner or later. They bear aloft the banner of the social gospel. In spite of ever renewed disappointments they cling to the hope that the time will surely come when all the kingdoms of this world shall be of the Lord and his Christ. But remember, they cherish this hope not in the eschatological sense of the Scriptures; they expect it by the gradual adoption of the principles of Jesus Christ on the part of human society.

Now here comes Niebuhr declaring that such hope is vain; that there is an unbridgeable gulf between a man's individual and his social behavior; that a man may be a Christian in his personal life and remain an egoist in his group relation. Such a contrast, he says, will always persist. There never will be a perfectly just society. The "Kingdom of God" is not just around the corner; no it will never come by the normal development of man's resources, moral or religious. Christ and the first Christians, had their eschatological belief, but they believed in the coming of the kingdom by divine intervention; it was God's gift, not man's achievement.

Niebuhr takes sharp issue on this question with the idealists of various schools. Here are the educators, their mouthpiece John Dewey of Columbia University. According to him the cause of the trouble is just the ignorance of the people. What we need is education and social skill and our difficulties will soon be solved. Niebuhr tells him that our social conservatism is not chiefly due to ignorance, but to the self-interest of the dominant groups, and that the social injustice obtaining cannot be resolved by moral suasion only. There is inevitable conflict to be expected and in this conflict power must be challenged by power. Sociologists, too, console themselves with the belief that social conflict will be an expedient of the moment only, until broader principles of education and cooperation can be established. Niebuhr thinks that conflict, coercion, force will continue to be used as long as the clash of group interests is operative.

It is not pleasant to follow Niebuhr as he points out the futility of man's group effort in constructing a just society and finds him un-

able again and again to conform his collective life to his individual ideals. Creeds and institutions of democracy, he says, have never been fully divorced from the special interests of the commercial classes. It was the faith of the Enlightment that the rational resources of man would enable him to erect in course of time a perfectly balanced society. Such faith was a romantic dream. Reason does indeed tend to check selfish impulses. A growing rationality in society does destroy the uncritical acceptance of injustice, but men will never be wholly reasonable. The force of egoistic impulse is much stronger than most analysts realize. Our goal cannot be an ideal society; we must be satisfied with a society saved from disaster.

Even religion, though it enhances the value of personality and has tried to rid it of selfishness (by asceticism and mysticism) has definite limitations to its power and extension. Nations will never subject themselves to "the law of Christ". No nation in history has ever been purely unselfish. The masses, says Luther, will always be unchristian. Sentimentality has always been the peculiar vice of liberal Protestantism as defeatism has been of orthodoxy. In spite of the War liberal Protestants still believe the Kingdom of God is gradually approaching. A sentimental generation has destroyed the apocalyptic note in the vision of Christ.

In a chapter on the morality of nations Niebuhr shows that national self-interest has ever been the guiding star of statesmen. They may hide it behind glittering phraseology as they did in the World War, but their hypocrisy is altogether too transparent. There is as yet no force to bring social restraint on the self-will of powerful nations.

And as with the nations so is self-interest with the classes the dominating motive. The privileged classes try to justify their privileges by the claim of special ability and useful function. What ever truth there may be in this in exceptional cases, ability is not always transmitted to the next generation and the leisure class resulting performs few useful functions. Still people go on to pay homage to it. Even those who see through the sham hate to break the shackles because of the menace of social disturbance. Religion itself lends the status quo its halo: "The powers that be are ordained of God."

In the attitude of the Proletarian classes Niebuhr finds much not only to be excused but to be praised. Russia has sought to change society by a violent revolution, a method not likely to be taken in Western Europe. It has reconstructed the nation on the principles of Marx: a social equalitarian idealism. Niebuhr naturally condemns the vindictiveness of the Soviet regime, but he seems to admit what Lenin has said, that Communism has made its way by its idealism and not by its realism; by its spiritual promise, not its material prospects. He contends that Marx has shown that the disproportion of power is the root of social injustice, and that this is his ethical contribution.

There are three ways in which men have sought to counteract the injustice of society: 1. by non-resistance (such as advocated by Tolstoi) 2. by non-violent resistance (Gandhi's way, he called it "soul-

force" against body-force) 3. by violent resistance. The first is altogether ineffectual. The second is more adapted to the oriental than to the occidental mind. The third has been tried by Russia with rather large success. It still remains to be seen whether this success is final. It is impossible to wholly approve of the Soviet experiment without accepting the principle that the end justifies the means.

As Niebuhr rests his case, the outcome of his critical study is that "it seems necessary to abandon the hope of achieving a rational equalitarian social goal, and be content with the expectation of its gradual approximation". Such an outcome is bound to be disappointing. The evolutionist objects to it with all his heart. Professor Coe reminds Niebuhr of the fact that in the evolutionary process the unexpected often happens and that forces and variations may emerge that upset Niebuhr's prognostications completely.

The Kantian idealist also would register his dissatisfaction. In his view what ought to be must be and will be. He finds in human nature the unconquerable urge to make all life moral. If this is impossible it would seem to make this world an unreasonable world, a world where man's highest ideals are doomed to defeat. Kant himself, therefore, postulated an eternal world where the wrongs and failures of this world would be righted and redressed. He who abandons Kant's postulates could hardly feel at home in Niebuhr's imperfect society.

To us who are biblically oriented, Niebuhr's conclusions seem to be well substantiated. Man will never attain an earthly paradise. The Christian believes in the ultimate victory of Christ, his gospel and his principles. But it will come from above, not from below. It is true that the article of Christ's second coming has been largely squeezed out of our Christian program. Niebuhr, too, only alludes to it, without any definite commitment. He says, "liberalism has eliminated the apocalyptic note from Christ's vision", but he himself does not sound that note very strongly either.

The book shows again Niebuhr's great powers of critical analysis. Also his marvelous acquaintance with a wide range of pertinent literature. He delights in uncovering the weak points in the reasoning of his opponents, whether they be John Dewey or Professor Coe, or others. It occurred to us that a good many names of the liberal school are not mentioned although their opinions are known to differ widely from Niebuhr's own. Perhaps he did not want to hurt the feelings of old friends. Nevertheless his conclusions have not been affected by his sympathies.

We hope the book, with its solid reasoning and its sobering effect, will be read by many of his fellow-synodicals.

**I Believed and Therefore Have I Spoken.** Twenty-five Sermons by *Louis William Goebel.* Delivered in the First English Evangelical Church of Chicago. Published by Hautau and Otto, Chicago, 1932. 254 pages.

Brother Goebel lately celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of his ordination. Twenty of these twenty-five years he spent in the service

of the First English Evangelical Church of Chicago. This church, so reviewer desires to state, had under his pastorate a most remarkable development. Goebel conceived the plan of choosing twenty-five of the sermons he preached in this congregation and presenting them to his people as a kind of memorial of his anniversary. The plan was carried out and as a result we have before us an attractively bound volume of sermons, printed on splended paper and in large type, so that even older people can read them with perfect ease. We believe that the brethren in the ministry will be glad to examine and possess this book of sermons preached by the vice-president of our Synod.

Now, what kind of sermons are they and on what general principle were they selected from the many sermons brother Goebel had in his "barrel"? They are not doctrinal sermons, the kind that used to be preached in our theological past, say on the atonement or the virgin birth, etc. Nor were they strung together as they belonged to the first, second or third article of the Christian faith. They were, finally, not sermons whose object was to show that we can still believe and be intellectually respectable. We mean they have not to do with the intellectual difficulties of the modern believer. There are today many sermons of this kind, where the preacher tries to show the reasonableness o fa faith in God, in the deity of Christ, the hope of immortality, and so on. Goebel reasoned that the number of those in the church whose troubles come from the unwillingness of the intellect is but small.

So he decided to give his people the sermons that have to do with the *growth and culture of the Christian life*. We believe he did wisely in choosing this for his main subject. If we try in our pulpits to show that the Christian faith is the best and, finally, the only way to battle successfully with the problems and troubles of the actual life we doubtless reach more hearts and do them the greatest service. This will make our sermons practical in the best sense of the word. It is the ethical note, so insistent in our time, emphasizing that our faith must eventuate in the good life or lose the confidence of the people. If you read these sermons you will see that a minister can put such a stress on life without losing sight of the fact that it is faith that produces such a life. Goebel never makes the mistake of trying to generate Christian life apart from Christian faith. (See his sermon on "the Lordship of Jesus": Jesus not a teacher only).

Goebel is fond of and apt in, illustration: a very valuable feature in the pulpit. Take, for instance, the sermon entitled, "The Desert in Bloom". He preached this in Colorado as the representative of the Synod. Beautifully he applied the effect of irrigation on the soil to the action of divine grace on the Christian life. Some of his other titles are: "The Troubled Conscience" (Psalm 51); "God Counting on Us"; "Nevertheless" (the heroism of faith); "So Big" (against our infatuation with Bigness); "Follow the Gleam" (the Lord is my Light); "A Momentous Decision" (the whole life must be staked on faith in Christ).

Goebel's sermons have more than the usual length. They each fill ten pages (good-sized) in the book. It must have taken forty-five minutes to preach them. For a forceful preacher like him it might be all right, but thirty minutes would be better with the average man. We commend the book most heartily to the brethren. It can be obtained through Eden Publishing House.

**Preaching and the Social Crisis.** A Series of Lectures delivered before the Boston University School of Theology. *Edited by G. Bromley Oxnam*, President of DePaw University. The Abingdon Press, New York, 1933. 234 pages, $1.50.

These addresses reveal a great difference in viewpoint. Socialists like Kirby Page, H. Ward and Jerome Davis find little to commend in the church today and can see a possibility of salvation only in her deliberate adoption of the Socialistic program. Others, again, declare that the redemption of the race is dependent on the redemption of the units who compose the race (so Bishop Charles Wesley Burns). But all of the contributors agree that in some way or other the church must try to cope with the social problems that make our times so critical. Kirby Page, the editor of "Tomorrow", declares that the ship of Capitalism is sinking and will carry down all institutions that fasten themselves like barnacles to its hulk. The collective sins that reach so far and are so destructive in our complex society ought to receive more attention from the preacher than individual sins whose reach is comparatively limited. The present economic order rests on three cornerstones: self-interest, competition and the laissez-faire attitude of the government. It results in the evils of (1) covetousness ("To be successful in the struggle for privilege and power you have to be covetous —and generous", this the way of the rich and respectable church member).

(2) Another bitter fruit of capitalism is the extremes of wealth and poverty, creating a surplus of producers' capital and a shortage of consumers' capital. Under the profit system the intensification of the class struggle is inevitable.

The *only way out*, so far discovered, is *Socialism*. Its dynamic is public service. It puts cooperation in place of competition. And it makes the state the clearing house for all interests. It alone makes possible social "planning".

Professor Davis of Yale University has a great admiration for Communism. He deplores its godlessness, but lifts high its idealism. Communists believe in living and working for service. They are willing to sacrifice; they have overcome tremendous handicaps and can show great achievements. Unless we create a sense of living up to the high ethical declarations we preach, we shall go down before Communism. "We must prove that Christianity has a greater dynamic power, a greater capacity to sacrifice, a greater ability to reconstruct the economic order for the benefit of all the people than Communism. It is only thus that we can meet its challenge."

Fred Winslow Adams, Professor of Worship and the Pastoral Office at Boston University School of Theology, believes that worship can have a creative part in social reconstruction. Worship is the very heart of religion. Since adoration of God is the source of all Christian striving, worship must be given a central part in our religious life. It is not sufficient to cultivate it in the personal life; it has to be given its rightful place in the services of the congregation. To effect this he proposes readjustment of the "Christian Year" to the new social viewpoint. The Christian Year has done good service in the past in making the people feel at home in the great drama of the Lord's life. But there are, in its second half, twenty-seven Sundays after Trinity. Here is plenty of room to incorporate in it the elements and implications of the social gospel. The readings from the Bible in the worship hour, the hymns to be used, the subjects to preach on ought to reflect the social outlook and the great objectives the modern church is identified with. This is a difficult task; but, well performed it will make the congregation as familiar with the social ethics of the Christian life as it has been with the life of the Master in its bearing on the faith of the church.

Bishop F. McConnell, in his usual masterly way, thinks that the religious experience of the individual, which we may call the mystical side of religion, should lead to a moral outcome. In the Bible all the mysticism is joined to the recognition of human values. "Worship must eventuate in moral activity; but moral activity finds its true source in a moral God."

The twelve writers in this symposium approach the Social Crisis each in a different way. The diversity of their viewpoints forcibly brings out the complicated task of the church of the day. Some speak with more of optimism and some with less (e. g. K. Page and J. Davis). But since the consciousness of the greatness of the problem is the first step towards improvement we may view the future with hope. Every great period in the history of the church was preceded by a sense of human need and a reaching out after divine support. This sense pervades the church now in increasing fashion. If the church follows its men of light and leading the coming time will bring us nearer to the land of promise.

**God. The Eternal Torment of Man,** by *Marc Boegner.* Translated from the French by Morton Scott Enslin. Harper & Brothers, 1931. 165 pages.

In a very impressive chapter the author shows that it is no exaggeration to term the quest after God man's ternal *torment.* He knows that many will try to convince us that the interest in God is on the wane; and that there are multitudes who are entirely indifferent. The cynics may even call the God question an ancient illusion and treat the subject as a delightful jest. Voltaire was cynical enough, still he said if there was no God he had to be invented. The modern Nietzsche proclaimed that the "Death of God" was the most important

event in the history of humanity. At the same time he was obsessed all his life by a single problem, "What is the meaning of life for men, granting that there is no God?" To Pascal true religion expressed the torment of his whole life. If we delve into the classic of religious devotion, the psalms, how overpowering the impression of the need of God, of the joy of his presence and the anguish of soul when he hides his face!

In a chapter, "Across the World of Gods", the writer examines the religions of mankind. Some (like Buddhism e. g.) seem to be religions without God. Confucius constructs a system that pays attention to the dead ancestors and none to God. But when we go into the remoter past, we find in China, in the Shinto of Japan, in the Indo-European religions, the belief in a supreme being: a "Dyaus pitar", "Zeus pater", a Brahma; an image of the true God before whom the other divinities disappear. We see that "all the uncivilized races have undergone a fall from primitive theism, for which they preserve a homesick longing".

The study of sociology has taught us that there is always an intimate connection between the form of society in which people live and that of their religious life. But it is going too far to see in religion a mere echo of the social life. For if it was, how would you explain the conversion of primitives to a spiritual experience totally different from their environment and the further fact that such converted people at once begin to work at a transformation of the social surroundings to which they belong? Again, to think that the heathen enjoy the life which they are leading (the "laughter of the heathen") shows only the ignorance of the superficial observer. The missionary worker knows only too well the moral and religious darkness in which they linger.

If we consider faith in God from the metaphysical standpoint, can we prove it rests on fact and is not a fiction? The agnostic tells us we don't know anything about God for God is not an object of experience. We only know ideas about God, not God himself. Give us evidence of him and we will believe they say. The pantheistic idealists give us the immanence of God, not his transcendence. Their God is merged with the impersonal reason and the laws of thought. He is not a personality. Whatever difficulties we experience in thinking of God as a person, if we deny him personality he is on a lower level than man. It may be impossible to demonstrate the fact of God, it is certainly reasonable to believe in him. All anthropological investigation shows that belief in a supreme being is a fundamental characteristic of man. "God is an inward truth which we are morally bound to accept." Man finds in himself the urge to overcome and transform his natural self, a feeling that he ought to be what he is not (Kant's categorical imperative). Faith in God is the source and guarantee of victorious self-improvement.

In the last chapters the author takes up the Christian conception of God and his revelation in Jesus Christ. He grants the fact that this revelation was given in images, the anthropomorphisms of the Bible. But by inspiration God makes man able to understand him. Inspired

people become revealers of God to others. Their "torment of God" is stilled, only to break forth again. But since there is opened in them a well of water springing up into eternal life it can be said that they shall "never thirst" because there is always a new supply ready for every new need.

The author's book is written with the clarity the French are known for. His authorities are nearly all of his own country; Pascal's "Pensées" are his favorite source. It will be studied with great profit and enjoyment. The writer's warm conviction is no less conspicuous than his intellectual acumen.

**Who Moved the Stone?** by *Frank Morison.* The Century Co. New York & London, 1930. 294 pages.

In this book, the author, an English divine, wants to give us not only the story of the Easter fact and the events that led up to it ,but also a piece of inner history. At one time he did not share the full faith of the Christian church. As a young man, he tells us, when the creed was being confessed in church according to the Book of Common Prayer, he would go as far as "suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried", and then set his teeth hard, refusing to go on with "the third day he rose again". He had later even intended to write a book on the suffering and death of Christ stripping the Lord's life of its "overgrowth of primitive beliefs". But as he delved more deeply into a study of the facts and considered the history of the early church and the effect Easter had on it, he had to revise his position and came to believe that something happened on "the third day", not easy to explain but what looked very much like a real divine intervention.

With a thoroughness seldom equaled and the imaginative power of a literary artist, he reconstructs in this book the events of the last seven days of the Lord's life and especially of the period from Thursday night to Easter Sunday. He sheds new light on some of the well known incidents and furnishes a key to some of the unsolved problems. For instance, why were the highpriests so glad to accept the services of Judas? Not only, he says, for fear of the Jews and a possible rising of the populace friendly to Jesus, but for fear of Jesus himself. Judas told them not only where Jesus was that night, but that he was willing to surrender himself, that opposition on his part was not to be expected.

Then the author suggests that the High Priest had an interview with Pilate that same night and that he got Pilate's promise that the governor would not interfere with their plan. Thus it would seem more intelligible that Pilate, at a very early hour Friday morning, should be ready for a trial of the prisoner. But why, then, should Pilate in the trial reverse himself and try so very hard to acquit the prisoner or, if that was impossible, to wash his hands of the whole business? And why was the governor, otherwise so domineering, so vacillating and yielding in this case? This difficulty the writer explains by the part Pilate's wife took in the trial. He must have told

her of the trial before retiring, and after her terrifying dreams about Jesus she must have exerted strong pressure on his superstitious mind.

Coming to the events of Easter Sunday, there is the story of the empty tomb. The high priests say the disciples stole the body. This is an entirely impossible explanation, neither psychologically likely, nor physically practicable. The tomb of Jesus sank at once into oblivion. The authorities did not make any search for the body, or for another burial place whither the body might have been transported. And the disciples showed a strange indifference for the place where his sacred body had lain. Something must have happened that changed their entire outlook. In the course of a few weeks we see the disciples emerge again as people with a triumphant faith, a faith neither Jews nor Gentiles could shake, a faith in a living and exalted Lord. There is a gap of seven weeks before they do come out with their message. This gap we can only explain by what the records say of the appearances of their Lord and the instructions he gave them. The origin of the church, the lives of its leaders, especially of Peter, James (the Lord's brother) and Paul cannot be understood except on the basis of real, tremendous, transforming experiences. The chapter dealing with these matters is great reading.

But the strange thing about the book is that the question in the title, "Who Moved the Stone?" is not really answered. The author has a story about "a servant of the High priest" (from "the gospel of the Hebrews") to whom the Lord is said to have given his linen cloth and that he then appeared to James. He may have been the "young man", he thinks, the women found sitting in the grave. But that is a very doubtful conjecture and certainly doesn't explain who moved the stone.

The writer closes with this sentence: "There may be, and, as the writer thinks, there certainly *is*, a profoundly historical basis for that much disputed clause in the Apostles' Creed—'the third day he rose again from the dead'."

After the exceedingly able and convincing exposition of the preceding chapters of the book, this seems to us a disappointing conclusion.